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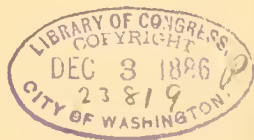
NANCY AND COMPANY

IN ECCENTRIC PIECE IN FOUR ACTS

(FROM THE GERMAN OF ROSEN)

BY
AUGUSTIN DALY

AS FIRST ACTED AT DALY'S THEATRE, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1886



NEW YORK, 1886
PRINTED AS MANUSCRIPT FOR THE AUTHOR

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TROW'S
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY,
NEW YORK.

NANCY AND COMPANY.

THE FIRM.

Original Cast at Daly's Theatre, 1886.

MR. EBENEZER GRIFFING : a Caution and a Warning to Parents and Guardians.....MR. JAMES LEWIS
KEIFE O'KEIFE, Esq., in thrall to the "Griffing," as well as to his fair Niece MR. JOHN DREW
CAPTAIN PAUL RENSELLER, U.S.A., laying siege to the "Griffing's" daughter, and to the "Griffing" himself MR. OTIS SKINNER
YOUNG MR. SIKES STOCKSLOW: a "Lamb" from the Street.....MR. GEORGE PARKES
TIPPY BRASHER: a well-managed husband..MR. WILLIAM GILBERT
JULIUS: a bell-boy at the Windsor.....MR. JOHN WOOD
MRS. HULDAH DANGERY: a species of "Safety Deposit Company" for a valuable Niece MRS. G. H. GILBERT
ORIANA: her Daughter and his Niece.....MISS VIRGINIA DREHER
DAISY GRIFFING: his Daughter and her Niece..MISS EDITH KINGDON
BETSY: the "new girl" at Griffing's.....MISS MAY IRWIN
NANCY BRASHER.....MISS ADA REHAN

. The action of the piece is comprised within eleven hours.

ACT I.—NOON! The Scent of the Jessamine!

ACT II.—AFTERNOON! The Firm of NANCY & CO. gets into Hot Water.

ACT III.—EVENING! Several People are made to "Toe" the Mark.

ACT IV.—MIDNIGHT! Love's labor's won exactly as you like it, and all's well that ends well after The Tempest.

ACT. I.

SCENE :—*Reception room at GRIFFING'S. Arch L. C. for general entrance. A window down L., above it a door leading to DAISY'S room; at R. down stage, a door leading to O'KEIFE'S room; at R. C. up stage an arch leading to GRIFFING'S apartments; a mantel and fireplace, C. In C. a table, sofa at R., and easy-chairs at L.; an air of luxury about everything.*

The curtain rises to a lively air (Bou'ld Sojer Boy). Door-bell is heard to ring. BETSY crosses at back from R. C. to L. C., and presently re-enters followed by CAPTAIN RENSSELLER.

Captain. Mr. Griffing at home?

Betsy. Yis sor—what name, please?

Captain. Captain Rensseler! [*Putting his hat down C. and looking at BETSY.*] Ah! you're a new girl.

Betsy. I've only been here since yisterday afternoon, sor.

Captain. Exactly, otherwise you would know me. Take in my name, please. [*BETSY exits R. C. He sees her off, then hurries to the mantel, looks into the vase and says, delighted.*] A letter! Daisy is an angel. [*Kisses and pockets the letter; then produces another from his pocket.*] Here's one by return post. [*Puts it into the vase.*] Be faithful to us, beloved letter-box, and let nobody else appropriate your contents. Some one coming! [*Crosses to C. hurriedly and sits L. C.; BETSY and GRIFFING enter at R. C. RENSSELLER springs up to meet him.*] Ah! my dear Mr. Griffing, good morning.

Griffing. [*A very excitable man; constantly moving; full of sarcastic humor; at present his tone denotes inward anger, although he speaks very politely.*] Good morning, Captain. [*BETSY exits.*]

Captain. Allow me to shake your honest hand.

Griffing. [*Evading the shake.*] Yes, exactly. [*Forced shake.*] What can I do for you this morning?

Captain. I merely looked in to ask after your health.

Griffing. Humph! you are too kind. You've done the same thing every day for three months.

Captain. Until it has become an affectionate necessity.

Griffing. You're too good. Don't trouble yourself any longer. I've enjoyed the best of health—for years.

Captain. When I first met you, three months ago, you seemed indisposed. Miss Daisy thought so too.

Griffing. You seem to attach a great deal of importance to my daughter's opinions.

Captain. The greatest importance.

Griffing. Indeed! Well, since you come right out, so will I. Please be seated. [*Both sit.*]

Captain. You're very kind.

Griffing. You were introduced to us last summer at Saratoga, by an old friend of mine.

Captain. Yes, Judge Mooby. I can never repay him.

Griffing. Nor I either. Since that time you have followed us as if we were your flag.

Captain. I was drawn irresistibly.

Griffing. But I observed that you generally came to see me when I was out.

Captain. That was my misfortune.

Griffing. And you preferred to converse with me through the intermediary of my daughter.

Captain. I wanted to make my communications as agreeable as possible.

Griffing. Thanks for your consideration. As I was blind enough not to appreciate your attachment to me, I left the Springs and returned to the city.

Captain. It was a hard blow.

Griffing. Which you parried strategically—by following us.

Captain. I have six months' leave of absence.

Griffing. And nothing to do but inquire after my health.

Captain. It is a pleasure, not a duty.

Griffing. [*Rises.*] Stuff!

Captain. Stuff, my dear Mr. —

Griffing. Stuff and nonsense! Whenever we meet, we feed each other with polite phrases. I, because you're a gentleman and an officer; *you*, because Daisy is my daughter. Now let's drop all that and speak our honest sentiments.

Captain. [*Rises.*] I ask nothing better.

Griffing. Now, your honest sentiment is about this: "I don't care a rap for you, old fellow—all I want is Daisy."

Captain. [*Admiringly.*] How on earth did you—?

Griffing. Guess it? Because *my* sentiment is simply this: "No popinjay in uniform shall have my daughter!" [*Crosses, R.*]

Captain. This is a studied insult to the entire army of the

United States—a small but respectable class of citizens.
[Sits L. of table.]

Griffing. Heaven forbid that I should insult our small but respectable army. I love the army—and the navy, too. I'm the first to appreciate them in times of war, street riots, or other dangers. But not when I want to marry my daughter.

Captain. What objection have you to me?

Griffing. Because you're a sad dog.

Captain. Oh! oh!

Griffing. I've been making inquiries about you. Your father has had to pay your debts twice. You're fond of champagne, cards, and sport generally.

Captain. I'll reform.

Griffing. My son, we never reform, I know. I've been a sad dog in my day, too.

Captain. You too?

Griffing. Me too.

Captain. Impossible!

Griffing. That is, in theory.

Captain. Oh! you've been a sad dog in theory only.

Griffing. Yes. [*Renseller laughs.*] Just as I was about to be engulfed by the vortex of folly, I was saved by a lucid interval.

Captain. Indeed! and what particular folly were you most inclined to?

Griffing. Being a widower, my folly was beauty. If it hadn't been for my lucid intervals, I should have been lost.

Captain. How singular! That's my particular folly, too. How did you save yourself?

Griffing. My treatment wouldn't do you any good. You haven't the moral strength. But it's no secret. Whenever I found myself bewitched by the siren of the hour, I procured her photograph.

Captain. Her photograph? That's nothing extraordinary.

Griffing. [*Artfully.*] But what did I do with these photographs? [*Pause.*] I put them into an album.

Captain. Even that has been attempted before.

Griffing. Now comes the point. In my lucid intervals, I placed my own portrait next that in the album, and contemplated the two side by side. Then I pictured myself taking the adored one to the altar as my second wife. In a moment I could hear the comments of my acquaintances—the pity, the sarcasm, the contempt, the derision!—until I got so furious that I always tore out my own picture and tossed it into the fire. And that's the way I managed to remain a widower.
[Walks up and down.] Which is the main thing.

Captain. [*Eying him through his glass.*] It isn't everybody can do that successfully. You have the advantage of most men.

Griffing. I have a great advantage, for I know that I am neither handsome nor young. But I'm not reformed. I spend a lot of money on photographs yet. I've got ten albums full. I keep the last under lock and key.

Captain. [*Rising.*] Well, in your case that's a very harmless amusement. But now, to go back to our starting-place.

Griffing. Well?

Captain. You deny me every hope?

Griffing. I won't trust my daughter with you. [*Crosses, L.*] You're too great a favorite with the fair sex. I won't have my girl devoured by jealousy.

Captain. Is that your only reason?

Griffing. No. I've promised her to somebody else.

Captain. Oh! old and ugly?

Griffing. No, but not dangerous. Nobody could possibly try to deprive her of any part of *his* affection.

Captain. Who is he?

Griffing. I suppose you want to frighten him off.

Captain. Certainly not—if Miss Daisy loves him.

Griffing. Daisy is a child—and loves toys. He will buy her richer toys than you could. [*Crosses, R.*] So don't waste your precious time. Give us up.

Captain. Am I never to ask after your health again?

Griffing. Not for the present. When Daisy is married, you may resume if you care to.

Captain. Thanks! Thanks! And now, farewell forever.

Griffing. [*Shaking his hand.*] If you wish to be happy, break yourself of being so attractive.

Captain. [*Shaking his hand.*] You will think with some regret of me when I am at a distance.

Griffing. The greater the distance—the less the regret.

Captain. Farewell! Farewell,—O farewell! [*Exits, L. c.*]

Griffing. Well, I've got rid of that pest at last. Now he's out we'll keep him out. [*Touches bell on table.*]

Betsy. [*Entering, L. c.*] Was it you was afther ringing, sor?

Griffing. [*Aside.*] Yes. [*Struck by her appearance—after a pause.*] Our new girl! Remarkably pretty. Quite an air, too.

Betsy. Was it you rung, sor?

Griffing. You saw that military gentleman who just left?

Betsy. Yis, sor, I seed him.

Griffing. I'm never at home when he calls.

Betsy. Yis, sor! [*Going.*]

Griffing. Stop a moment. [*Walking round her.*] How do you like your new place?

Betsy. Oh! I think I'll like it very much, sor.

Griffing. Indeed!

Betsy. I think I'd better be going, sor.

Griffing. [*Gruffly.*] Ugh! Don't be scared. I want to speak to my daughter.

Betsy. Shall I call Miss Daisy? [*Crosses, L.*]

Griffing. Yes. [*Betsy goes.*] Stop a moment more. [*Smiles at her.*]

Betsy. [*Hesitating, astonished.*] Ye—yes—sor!

Griffing. [*Beckons her to him. She steps back timidly.*] Have you got a photograph?

Betsy. S—sor?

Griffing. It is a rule of my house, not only to require certificates of character with my servants, but their photographs as well. So if you haven't one already, go and have your portrait taken at once at my expense.

Betsy. [*Blubbers.*] It's not a thief that I am, and I won't be stuck up in the Rogues' Gallery.

Griffin. [*Laughs.*] Pooh! [*Sweetly.*] It's only a mark of regard for my faithful domestics.

Betsy. [*Aside.*] Well, I never! Did you ever hear the bate ov that? I wonder if he's in earnest. [*Exits, L.*]

Griffing. Pull up, Ebenezer! I begin to feel myself drawn in by the vortex. Oh, beauty—beauty! Even in the housemaid thou art omnipotent.

Daisy. [*Entering L. D., with Betsy.*] You want me, papa? [*Drawling tone.*]

Griffing. Yes. [*Crosses c.*] Betsy, leave us! [*Winks at her and motions her away.*]

Betsy. [*Excited, makes a bolt toward him.*] Hein! [*Coughs, and approaches him, aside.*] Sor! Sor! Carte de visite—vignette—or cabinet?

Griffing. [*Confused.*] Whatever you like. Go away.

Betsy. Then I'll have an imperial panel. [*Exits, L. c.*]

Daisy. What does she want, pa?

Griffing. She?—Oh! Betsy? She—a—boiler is burst, or something. But no matter now. I want to talk to you seriously. Captain Renseller has been here again.

Daisy. [*Pouting, looking round.*] Why didn't you let me know?

Griffing. Here! Here! What's this?

Daisy. [*Earnestly.*] You must call me the next time he comes.

Griffing. [*Angrily.*] He'll never come again !

Daisy. Oh ! pa ! [*Alarmed.*]

Griffing. I requested him to favor us with his forgetfulness.

Daisy. Why ?

Griffing. Because he pays you too much attention.

Daisy. Is that a crime ?

Griffing. I don't like him.

Daisy. But I like him ! I'm sure he's perfectly amiable and well-bred.

Griffing. We're all amiable and well-bred before marriage. Besides, I've got the very husband for you in my mind's eye.

Daisy. [*Pleased.*] For me ? Who is it ?

Griffing. The son of my old friend Stockslow, the broker, who retired with two millions.

Daisy. [*Pettishly.*] What ? Little Siksey Stockslow ! That conceited, insufferable goose, that every girl laughs at ? [*Crosses, L.*]

Griffing. Don't give 'em a chance to catch him, or they'll laugh at you. He's rolling in money. Such men are never ridiculous.

Daisy. [*Romantically.*] I could never love him in this world.

Griffing. Oh ! rubbish ! He'll build you a splendid house, filled with frescoes and electric lights, and all the modern improvements ; give you a satin-lined carriage, and ten servants to dance attendance on you.

Daisy. I don't like that kind of ballet. [*Heroically.*] Better a tallow candle and true love, than electric lights and darkness here ! [*Hand to her heart.*]

Griffing. Bosh ! With electric light you can't have darkness anywhere. Come ! If you have formed any other ideas, put them out of your head at once. No one but young Sikes Stockslow shall have my blessing.

Daisy. Why can't I be as happy as my cousin Oriana—Aunty lets her have the man she wants, although he is only a poet.

Griffing. She hasn't got him yet. I've got him—under probation, locked in that room yonder. So far, the fellow has behaved very well, I admit. But sooner or later I'll detect him in something—give him his walking papers, save your cousin, and laugh at her foolish mother.

Daisy. [*Half crying.*] Pa ! you're cruel ! [*Throws herself into chair, R. of table.*]

Griffing. No, I'm not. I'm an exemplary parent. Shall

my daughter tremble at every rumor of the redskins rising on the plains? No—she shall live in the shadow of marble pillars—under frescoed ceilings and gilded cornices, with her placid broker. That's what I call repose. [*Exits, R. C.*]

Daisy. [*Rising.*] I don't want repose. [*Stamps her foot poutingly.*] I won't have Siksey Stockslow, if I have to die an old maid. I love my darling captain, and papa has got to give way at last. So he was here! [*A smile breaks over her face, she glances toward mantel c., then runs to the vase and takes out the letter.*] I knew I'd find traces of him. [*Opens and reads.*] "My adored girl." [*Kisses the letter.*] "Your father will probably interdict my visits."—He foresaw it!—"After this, therefore, I shall have to call upon some other inmate of your house. I have selected your lodger—Mr. Keife O'Keife, the poetical gentleman. See him at once, my darling. Tell him that I am the most intimate friend of his youth—that I cannot exist without his company, and that I shall call on him every day, and entreat him to read all his plays and poems to me, for several hours every day." Capital. So the captain will still come to the house, and our correspondence won't be interrupted. [*Runs to door, R., and calls off softly.*] Keife—Mr. Keife! One minute, if you please. Steal out softly, so papa won't hear you. He's in his observatory.

Keife O'Keife. [*A rather elegant gentleman, enters on tip-toe from R.*] What is it, Miss Daisy?

Daisy. Mr. Keife, you've heard me speak of Captain Renseller?

Keife. Never!

Daisy. Well, it don't matter. We met at Saratoga. Anyhow, he's an old college chum of yours, who hasn't seen you for ten years. Only to-day, for the first time, he learned you were living with us. Of course he'll call on you. He'll call every day. Yes. And you'll read your plays to him for hours and hours.

Keife. Well! But I don't know any person of his name. [*Crosses, L.*]

Daisy. But you must know him. See here, haven't I assisted you and Oriana? Remember how you gave pa your word of honor not to correspond with her for three months.

Keife. Well, haven't I kept my word.

Daisy. By my help. [*He takes her hand.*] Oriana wrote to me; I read her letters out to you; and then I wrote back to her what you confided to me. Now I'll make you a fair offer: You begin to remember your old friend, Captain Renseller, instantly, and I'll read you a letter I just received from Oriana.

Keife. I begin to see daylight, but there's a slight mist yet. Please explain—

Daisy. You, a poet? Where's your imagination? Pa has requested Paul—that's my captain—to discontinue his visits to *him*; so he'll call on *you*! Understand now?

Keife. [*Illumined.*] Ah, I see! *You* love the captain!

Daisy. I didn't say anything of the sort. [*Crosses, L.*] But I'm glad to find you can guess something. Now decide: are you and Paul old college chums, or are you not?

Keife. Chums! friends! twins! Why, I love him like a brother!—like a twin brother! Now are you satisfied?

Daisy. Perfectly. And for your reward, I'll inform you that Aunt Huldah and Cousin Oriana will be here *to-day*.

Keife. [*Delighted.*] To-day? Before my time of probation is over? Is the time of my torment to be shortened?

Daisy. Has your stay in our house been so very painful, then? [*Throws herself on the sofa, R. He sits R. of centre table.*]

Keife. Excessively! Your father is worse than a grand inquisitor. As I am a literary person, he looks upon me, with his mercantile senses, as a sort of outcast or pariah. Ever since the fatal day I loved your cousin and asked for her hand, and pledged myself to submit to any test he chose to propose, he has kept me here as a captive guest, to study my character, disposition, and habits, as a condition of giving his consent. I have to hold out a fortnight longer, now; but what haven't I endured for the last ten weeks! [*Rising.*] He has established an observatory and quarantine adjoining my room. He receives my guests; he has my every move and step dogged and watched; converses with me for hours to try and wring a confession of former errors and escapades from my innocent lips, and upbraids me for hypocrisy when I disappoint him.

Daisy. [*Rising.*] Pa has his little eccentricities, certainly. Look how he treats me. [*Crosses, L.*]

Keife. And so Oriana is coming to-day! *To-day*! [*With meaning.*] That's a good omen.

Daisy. A good omen of what?

Keife. I can't tell you *that*; but do you think you could induce Oriana to go to the theatre *to-night*?

Daisy. To the theatre to-night?

Keife. To the theatre to-night!

Daisy. [*Wonderingly.*] Why, there's a new play produced to-night. You wrote it. [*Pointedly.*]

Keife. No, no; I didn't write it. But I wish her to see it.

Daisy. [*Laughing.*] Are you sure it is not by you?

Keife. It appears to be an anonymous production.

Daisy. Oh, indeed! How do you do, Mr. Incognito?

Keife. Daisy, you're mistaken.

Daisy. Never mind. We'll all go to the theatre to-night.
[*Crosses, R., and listens.*] Sh! I think I hear pa coming. Don't forget! [*Crosses back, L.*] Captain Renseller is your oldest and dearest friend. Good-bye, Mr. Anonymous. [*Exits, L. D.*]

Keife. I'm afraid I betrayed too much of the secret there. She has guessed that I am concerned in the new play, and will tell it everywhere. [*Sits on edge of table, L. C.*] Especially to Oriana. Oriana! my muse! my goddess! If my probation were only over!

Griffing. [*Enters from above, R.*] Hollo! hollo! what's this? Wandering about the house? Remember your pledge! What are you doing here?

Keife. [*Hesitating, rises.*] I don't know. I must have stepped out in a fit of abstraction!

Griffing. Indeed? Humph! Hah! well—[*Suddenly.*] There was a visitor called here to-day for you!

Keife. [*Hurt.*] And you sent him away?

Griffing. Yes I sent him away. *His* was a lady! [*Keenly.*]

Keife. [*Mild surprise.*] A lady?

Griffing. A beautiful lady! Tall, fine eyes, musical voice, elegant figure, striking appearance!

Keife. [*Looks at him.*] Who can it be? [*Turns away, thinking.*]

Griffing. Exactly. Who can it be? Can't you think?

Keife. [*Frankly.*] Not the remotest suspicion.

Griffing. She perfumed the air with jessamine. Don't you know any lady who uses jessamine for a perfume?

Keife. None.

Griffing. That's very strange. She wanted to see *you* particularly. I told her that you received visitors only in my presence.

Keife. How could you? What will people think of me? [*Crosses stage, L.*]

Griffing. I don't care what they think. I hold the reins for the present, and I don't intend to let up on such a hard-boiled sinner as you are for a moment.

Keife. This is simply degrading.

Griffing. [*Digs him in the side.*] Come, now, confess—Who is she?

Keife. Don't I tell you I don't know?

Griffing. Look among your old photographs —[*Archly.*] you may find her.

Keife. Did she leave no message?

Griffing. Yes. When she was going, she said she *must* see you alone. You'll admit, I suppose, that this sounded suspicious?

Keife. I admit nothing. You may suspect what you please. It's a matter of perfect indifference to me.

Griffing. [*Eyes him.*] Hypocrite!

Betsy. [*Enters, L. C.*] Young Mr. Sikes Stockslow jist called, sor.

Griffing. Show him in. [*Betsy exits, L. C.*] Oblige me by retiring to your room, my dear fellow, but make no attempt to receive the suspicious lady with the jessamine perfume. I'll be on the watch.

Keife. Sir! [*Outburst.*] *When* is this thralldom to end! [*Exits, R. D.*]

Griffing. It will end as soon as I have proven you to be no better than the rest of us.

Young Stockslow. [*Enters, L. C. He is a blasé young man, dressed in exaggerated fashion.*] Morning, little papa! [*Titters.*]

Griffing. Not on 'Change to-day?

Stockslow. Made a pretty little pile by a nice little spec yesterday, so gave myself a little rest to-day, and thought I'd come to have a little talk over matrimony with little papa.

Griffing. Good! Sit down.

Stockslow. [*Sits R. of table.*] Well! [*Titters.*] How about little daughter?

Griffing. [*Sits on sofa, R.*] Oh! she's agreeable.

Stockslow. Fond of me—little bit?

Griffing. Oh! we couldn't ask her that, you know.

Stockslow. It'll come when she sees my little house. She'll have one little room *Louis Quinze*; one Japanese with two *trumeaux*, with frames that wide; French *rideaux* with Brussels lace; Lyonese covers; little panels by Coleman; little picture by Vedder; my photo in little parlor, life size, on horseback, by little Sarony—wonderful likeness, nice little horsey.

Griffing. [*Aside.*] He thinks more about the house and the horse than he does about the wife.

Stockslow. Little country place, too; little garden, little trees—a hundred feet high; two little busts on gate—nice little heads.

Griffing. Why, have you moved into your new house yet?

Stockslow. Move in on wedding-day. Living now at nice little hotel; little Windsor.

Griffing. Well, when would you like to speak to Daisy?

Stockslow. Right now, on the spot. That's the sort of little man I am.

BETSY announcing, L. C.

Betsy. Captain Renseller.

Griffing. [*Bounds up.*] Not at home.

Betsy. [*Stoutly.*] Och! it's not yourself he's after.

Griffing. Who, then?

CAPTAIN enters, L. C.

Captain. Good morning, again. Oh! you secretive man! You Egyptian sphinx! Here have I been visiting you for months, and just learned by *chance* that the friend of my youth, the one person I have yearned to see for years, is living in your house.

Griffing. [*Testily.*] You promised me——

Captain. Not to inquire after your health again. I don't. Your health is quite indifferent to me. I've come to see my old friend Keife. Where is Keife? [*To BETSY.*] Which is Mr. O'Keife's room? [*BETSY points R. and exits, L. C.*] Ah!

Griffing. [*Meditatively.*] So you know Mr. O'Keife, eh?

Captain. Do I know O'Keife? Why, we were almost rocked in the same cradle. Keife, my dear fellow, where are you? O'Keife!

O'KEIFE enters from R. D.

O'Keife. I believe I hear my name. [*Aside.*] A stranger! This must be my old college chum.

Griffing. [*Who has been eying both.*] Well, well—don't you recognize your old friend, who was rocked in the same cradle with you?

O'Keife. [*Assuming surprise.*] Can it be possible?

Captain. Doesn't your heart answer? [*Opens his arms.*]

Keife. [*Opens his arms.*] My long lost foster-brother. [*They meet.*] Ah! [*They embrace.*] GRIFFING gets R., STOCKSLOW, L.]

Captain. [*Aside.*] Much obliged, old fellow.

Keife. [*Same.*] Command me.

Captain. [*Pretending to wipe his eyes.*] How the tears will come at such a moment. [*Crosses to GRIFFING.*] My dear sir, you have gained another lodger. From this moment I shall remain day and night with my long lost friend. He must read all his works to me, as he did in infancy. Come, my dear friend, let's celebrate this meeting alone. [*Exeunt*

with O'KEIFE, arm in arm. *Embrace again at door.*
Ah!

Griffing. That's all a trick; too much, ah! There's some plot hatching. I must hurry this marriage. [*To STOCKSLOW.*] Do you know Captain Renseller?

Stockslow. Only by sight—a nice little fellow.

Griffing. I believe he's in love with Daisy.

Stockslow. Has he got the snug little pile that I have?
[*Crosses, R.*]

Griffing. No. So you're not jealous?

Stockslow. Not of a fellow who can't drive her out in his own little dog-cart. Not much.

Griffing. I'll call Daisy. You must speak to her at once—but cautiously. If she takes fright and runs away, you are smashed up, dog-cart and all. [*Goes to door, L., and calls.*] Daisy!

Stockslow. [*Examining himself in glass.*] Hope I look fresh from little band-box.

DAISY re-enters timidly from L. D.

Daisy. [*Sees STOCKSLOW, and aside, pettishly.*] Oh, dear!
[*Aloud.*] What is it, pa?

Griffing. I needn't introduce young Mr. Stockslow, my love; you know him. He has something to say to you. Listen attentively, and answer him like a good and dutiful daughter. [*To STOCKSLOW, aside.*] You had better begin by telling her all about the house. Take her mind off yourself as much as possible. [*Exits, R. C.*]

Daisy. Why, pa?

Stockslow. [*He bows to her. She turns her back on him. He regards her. Aside.*] Awful nice little girlie! [*Titters. She starts away.*] Make awful nice little wifey! She'll dress up my housey splendidly. [*Titters.*]

Daisy. [*Aside. Her back to him.*] Paul is here. He must have an explanation with Mr. Stockslow immediately. They must settle it between them.

Stockslow. [*Following her as she retreats gradually to L.*] Hem! I suppose little papa told you what I came for. [*Titters.*] What the little attraction is?

Daisy. Oh! yes. And I'll inform you at once what the counter-attraction is. [*Crosses, R.*]

Stockslow. [*Titters.*] Don't understand little joke!

Daisy. No? Wait a minute and you will. [*Goes R. and opens O'Keife's door.*]

O'Keife. [*Is heard declaiming inside.*]

“The blossoms fall and nightingales are mute,
As through the trees forsaken by their song
The chilling blasts of autumn sweep along;
And to my happiness I sing my last salute.”

Daisy. [*Calling off.*] Hist! Hist!
O'Keife. [*Inside.*] “O for the lost and blissful hours of love!”

Captain. [*Steals to door.*] What is it?
O'Keife. [*Inside.*] “O happy hours we spent in yonder grove!”

Daisy. [*Whispering.*] Tell Mr. O'Keife to go on reading, and you come out. [*RENSELLER kisses her and goes back.*]

O'Keife. [*Inside.*]

“Oh, shady foliage that concealed our kiss!
Oh, murmuring leaflets rustling at our bliss!”

CAPTAIN *reappears and closes door after him.*

Captain. Here I am.

Daisy. [*To STOCKSLOW, who has watched her operations in astonishment.*] Mr. Stockslow, this is Captain Renseller.
[*To CAPTAIN.*] Pa wants me to marry him. I won't. Break it to him gently. [*Aloud.*] As you gentlemen have important business together—good-morning. [*Exits, L. D.*]

Captain. [*Very polite.*] You are a friend of Mr. Grif-fing's?

Stockslow. I am going to marry his daughter.

Captain. So am I.

Stockslow. Both of us? Oh, no. [*Titters.*] The little grand jury would object.

Captain. Not at all. I intend to marry her first.

Stockslow. See here! you're joking!

Captain. No, sir, I'm not.

Stockslow. I have papa's word.

Captain. I have daughter's!

Stockslow. Little daughter will do what little papa says.
[*Titters.*]

Captain. Ordinarily. But in this instance I doubt it.
[*Crosses, L.*]

Stockslow. See here, little chappie! You want to get up a row with me.

Captain. [*Bows.*] Permit me to disclaim any intention of inflicting personal injury upon you.

Stockslow. [*Bows, tries to take his hand.*] I reciprocate your sentiments cordially.

Captain. Only you mustn't be offended if I steal away the bride.

Stockslow. I won't give you the chance.

Captain. Shall we make a bet?

Stockslow. Don't care! What is it?

Captain. The one who gets left shall be best man at the other's wedding and pay for the bachelor supper. Is it agreed?

Stockslow. [*Shaking hands.*] Done.

Captain. Come and lunch with me. We'll seal the bargain over a bottle of *Cordon Rouge*!

Stockslow. I'm agreeable! [*Struck with an idea.*] And after lunch I'll show you my little housey! *Her* little housey!

Captain. Good! Come along! [*Exeunt, L. c.*]

O'KEIFE is heard reading.

"Oh, shady foliage that concealed our kiss!
Oh, murmuring leaflets rustling at our bliss!"

Griffing. [*Re-entering.*] That fellow reads beautifully. I wouldn't have thought he had it in him. [*Looks around.*] But where's that booby? and Daisy? I hope she hasn't rejected him. Perhaps they've gone in to hear the reading. [*Goes softly to O'KEIFE'S door and opens it.*]

Keife. [*Declaiming, inside.*]

"The lightning strikes and thunder-clouds are flying,
And storms are raging through the lonely grove."

Griffing. He's alone. Not even the Captain with him. What's become of them? [*To O'KEIFE.*] I say—come here!

Keife. [*Enters, finishing his declamation.*]

"The youngness of the beautiful grows old,
And on thy lips the bride's sweet lips seem cold;
And in the crowd of joys—upon thy throne
Thou sit'st in state and hardenest into stone."

Griffing. [*Takes the book.*] What is that? [*Reads title.*] You've been reading somebody else's poems.

Keife. [*Placidly.*] I always do.

Griffing. [*Giving book back.*] That's why I liked them.

Where's that other fellow, who was almost rocked in the same cradle with you?

Keife. [*Crosses, L.*] Isn't he here? I never noticed his going.

Griffing. I see. You were reading for my benefit while he sneaked off to find my daughter? [*Furious.*] It was a plot! You shall pay me for this! Do you hear? You are the chief conspirator, and I promise you I'll make the last days of your probation worse than a congressional investigation. [*Crosses L., at door, calling.*] Daisy!

Daisy. [*Entering, L. D.*] What do you want now, pa?

Griffing. Where is Mr. Stockslow? [*KEIFE goes up c., then drops in chair by table, reading.*]

Daisy. I left him with Captain Renseller.

Griffing. [*Alarmed.*] Good gracious! That fellow will murder him!

Daisy. I think not. I saw them both going away arm in arm.

Griffing. Arm in arm! Worse and worse! [*Aside.*] Stockslow is an ass, and the Captain is more dangerous than I thought. [*To DAISY.*] Did Mr. Stockslow propose?

Daisy. [*Crosses, R.*] Oh, no, pa! He knew I wouldn't accept him.

Griffing. This is open rebellion. Now I'll quarantine you.

Daisy. [*Indignant.*] You mean to say that I'm to be locked up, pa?

Griffing. I mean to say that I won't have you plotting with this double-dyed hypocrite. [*Points to O'KEIFE.*] I'll let you both know that I won't be trifled with.

Daisy. Pa, I am your daughter, and I can be just as determined as you can be. I love Paul, and I can't be happy with any one else. It lies in your power to refuse him—but you can't compel me to marry a ninny who values a wife according as she harmonizes with his bric-a-brac and his *Louis Quinze* rooms. There! And now—Lock me up! I'm ready!

Griffing. This is riot—felony—mobs—where's the military?

Keife. The military is on the side of the rioters.

Griffing. [*L.*] Don't you be so funny! I'll attend to you.

Betsy. [*Outside, L. c.*] Right in there, ma'am.

Oriana. I'll go up.

Mrs. Dangery. You needn't announce us.

Daisy. It's Oriana! [*Runs to c.*]

Keife. The sun rises! [*Runs to R. c.*]

Griffing. [*Angrily.*] They couldn't come at a worse time! [*Goes toward front, L.*]

Oriana. [*In elegant street-dress appears, L. c., and embraces DAISY.*] My dear Daisy!

Daisy. I'm so glad to see you.

Mrs. Dangery. [*A hearty, gentle old lady, enters.*] We have surprised you, brother. [*Comes to him and tries to take his hands.*]

Griffing. Yes, you have. Women always make blunders.

Daisy. [*To KEIFE and ORIANA.*] Don't stand there like sticks—you two! When an engaged couple meet after nearly three months' absence, I should say a wee bit of a kiss was allowable.

Keife. [*Opening his arms.*] I'm dying for it!

Oriana. Oh! well——

Griffing. [*Goes up and steps between them.*] Not a foot! His probation hasn't expired.

Keife. Barbarian!

Oriana. [*Down L. c.*] Have you discovered much wickedness in him, uncle?

Mrs. Dangery. [*Crosses to O'KEIFE.*] I hope not. [*Shakes KEIFE's hand.*]

Griffing. Up to this time I have no proof. But I have clues—and I believe I am on the verge of an awful discovery.

Oriana. [*Laughs.*] You terrify me.

Daisy. It's all papa's imagination.

Keife. [*Crosses, c.*] Like the advertisers of fancy soaps—I solicit a trial.

Griffing. [*Preventing their meeting.*] We shall see—at all events, before the three months are up, not the slightest familiarity is permissible. Even this meeting is against the agreement. Mr. O'Keife will go to his room.

Oriana. Oh! Shame!

Daisy. Oh! pa!

Keife. [*To ORIANA.*] You trust me?

Oriana. With my life. [*GRIFFING pulls her away.*]

Keife. [*Mock resignation, to GRIFFING.*] Then I go resignedly. You may rage—but “I am armed so strong in honesty”—you know the rest. [*Digs him in the side.*] [*Aside, to DAISY.*] Don't forget about this evening—the theatre. [*Exits, R. D.*]

Griffing. [*Crosses to DAISY.*] What's that he whispered? Something about this evening.

Daisy. [*Crosses to ORIANA.*] A secret which none but cousin Oriana must hear. Come, coz—I'll tell you. [*Exits, with ORIANA, L. D.*]

Mrs. Dangery. [*Sits R. of table.*] Why don't you stop your nonsense, Ebenezer, and give your consent to this mar-

riage? Mr. O'Keife appears to be a perfectly model young man.

Griffing. [*Sits on sofa.*] There are no model young men. There isn't a man fit to be trusted.

Mrs. Dangery. A very poor compliment to yourself.

Griffing. I admit it. But I'm better than the rest. I'm satisfied with photographs.

Mrs. Dangery. What has the young man done?

Griffing. Nobody can find out what he *has* done *yet*. But patience, I'll get at it.

Mrs. Dangery. You seem to be in one of your very worst humors.

Griffing. I'm simply furious because I can't bring anything home to the rascal. Then Daisy won't marry young Stockslo, and insists on enlisting the military, and now you come pounding in upon me like a water-spout [*Mrs. DANGERY rises*], and against our agreement. [*Crosses, L.*] I wonder where I'll stow you away? How am I to keep those lovers apart?

Mrs. Dangery. You needn't disturb yourself. Oriana and I are stopping at the Windsor Hotel. Of course, she couldn't remain under the same roof with Mr. O'Keife.

Griffing. It's some consolation you *can* see *that*.

Betsy. [*Enters, L. c., with card.*] Excuse me, sor, but this gentleman is standing foreninst the door and [*hands card*] wants to see you particularly.

Griffing. [*Reads card.*] "Brasher!" [*Astonished.*] What on earth brings him to New York? [*Crosses to Mrs. DANGERY.*]

Mrs. Dangery. Mr. Brasher! That's your friend from Ohio, isn't it? Perhaps he's on his wedding-tour. You told me he got married.

Griffing. But that was nearly six months ago. Show Mr. Brasher in. [*Exit Betsy, L. c.*] I've heard that his wife is very fascinating.

Mrs. Dangery. Well, I won't stay. I'll get Oriana and we'll do a little shopping. You'll call on us at the hotel, won't you? No. 115, third floor. [*Going.*]

Griffing. Why don't you live on the roof at once?

Mrs. Dangery. Take the elevator. [*Exits, L. D.*]

TIPPY BRASHER *enters, well dressed, impulsive, yet shy—a quick, nervous manner, yet thoroughly gentlemanly.*

Griffing. By Jove! How you look! Why, what's the matter with you?

Brasher. [After glancing all around timidly, gets to him excitedly—grasps both his hands, and says tremblingly.] I'm in an awful trouble! awful!

Griffing. You alarm me!

Brasher. [Takes both GRIFFING's hands, then sinks on the sofa.] My wife has bolted.

Griffing. Impossible!

Brasher. Did you know Nancy? [Starts up.]

Griffing. No—I——

Brasher. Then don't say anything was impossible to her.

Griffing. I was prevented from accepting the invitation to your wedding.

Brasher. I wish I could describe Nancy to you: She's an angel. Beautiful as a sunny day. Hair like melted gold. Eyes deep and clear—just like a mountain-lake. Her figure like a pine-tree. Her disposition that of a child. Her brain equal to ten men. That's my wife. [Crosses, L.] That's my Nancy. [Sinks in chair L. of table.]

Griffing. Allow me. You forgot something. You left out the "foot of the gazelle"—that probably caused her to bolt. [Sits R. of table.]

Brasher. [Starting up.] Then she has bolted?

Griffing. So you say!

Brasher. I only surmise it. [Sinks back and puts his hat, a white hat, on the table.] Listen! We married for love. Do you know what that means?

Griffing. I have ten volumes of photographs.

Brasher. We lived like doves! My wife was playful as an infant. Suddenly she changed: grew silent and fond of solitude. Took to sitting up whole nights! What for? To write! Write what? That's a secret. She begged, and wheedled, and pouted—until I let her alone. Yesterday she told me she wanted to visit a sick relation in New York; would only be gone two days. I offered to go with her, but she wouldn't have it. Insisted on going alone. Asked me if I didn't trust her? if I doubted her love and fidelity? if I wanted to kill her with suspicion—and with that she flung her arms round me. [Fiercely.] I had to give in, hadn't I?

Griffing. You had! Anybody would!

Brasher. [Controls himself with an effort.] I did give in. Saw her off to the train myself and let her go. She did seem agitated at the last. After she was gone, I began to think I had been duped. I went to her room. Everything in order. [Grasps GRIFFING.] Suddenly my eye fell upon the grate!

Griffing. Yes.

Brasher. Here, among the ashes, was a great heap of burnt papers.

Griffing. I see. You rushed for the poker and rummaged among 'em.

Brasher. I did—and found nothing. Suddenly I saw a piece of paper lodged in the flue, where it had been carried by the draught.

Griffing. I see.

Brasher. [*Rises and pulls a half-burnt envelope out of his pocket.*] It was a half-burnt envelope addressed [*reads*] “Stanley Thorn.” [*Repeats, looking at GRIFFING.*] Stanley Thorn! Who is Stanley Thorn? What business has he with my wife—or she with him? [*Walks up and down.*]

Griffing. [*Turns over the envelope.*] The address is burnt off. Is this her writing?

Brasher. [*Stops.*] No. [*Walks up and down.*]

Griffing. Then she don't write to him?

Brasher. [*Stops.*] No! Worse! She's gone to him! Her agitation, her secrecy, my fears—all point to this. I have followed—you shall help me to find them.

Griffing. [*Glasses on.*] I know this writing.

Brasher. You do? [*Grasps him.*] Whose is it? [*Fiercely.*] His name?

Griffing. Gently! gently! my dear fellow! I've seen this handwriting, but where? [*Crosses, R.*] Let me think!

Brasher. Yes, think, but think quick.

Griffing. Perhaps my file of letters will assist me. Come to my room, where we'll look over several hundred I have on file from different people. [*Goes to door.*]

Brasher. [*Sinks into chair.*] What am I to do while you are looking over several hundred letters? Man alive, I'm ready to explode!

Griffing. Take a glass of water, and sit in a draft to cool. Come along; we'll find the writer. [*They exeunt, R. C.*]

Betsy. [*After they are well off, enters cautiously, L. C., looks round, then goes on tip-toe to O'KEIFE'S room, and knocks.*] Sor! sor! [*He appears at the door.*] A lady wishes to see you.

Keife. A lady! [*Staggered.*]

Betsy. A nice one; all over perfumery. [*She goes back to L. C., and beckons off.*] Nobody in the way. Yee's can come in. [*NANCY enters, L. C., anxiously.*]

Betsy. [*Significantly.*] I'll stand guard outside. [*Exits, L. C.*]

Naney. [*Aside.*] My heart is beating with great thumps! [*Breathless to O'KEIFE.*] You are Mr. Keife O'Keife?

Keife. That is my name. Will you be seated?

Nancy. I called once before to-day. [*Looking round.*]

O'Keife. [*Aside.*] She disseminates an odor of jessamine. She's the one!

Nancy. An old gentleman refused to announce me unless I saw you in his presence.

Keife. That's all right. We let him go about loose; he's perfectly harmless. [*Crosses, R., to conceal his rage.*]

Nancy. I went away, watched my opportunity, saw the servant at the hall-door, and gained her assistance, for I must have a private interview with you at once.

Keife. You are having it now. Pray be seated. What can I do for you?

Nancy. [*Sits R. of table, mysteriously.*] A new play is produced at the theatre to-night—by you?

Keife. [*Drawing his chair back.*] By me? You are misinformed.

Nancy. [*Drawing nearer.*] True, the plot, incidents, and characters are by Stanley Thorn; but the masterly construction is yours.

Keife. [*Drawing farther away.*] Who told you this?

Nancy. Four months ago you received a letter signed Stanley Thorn. It contained the sketch of a play and a request for your assistance in giving it shape and getting it produced. You were taken with the plot, accepted the offer, and communicated with Thorn. He exacted one pledge: that no one should know your collaborator until after the first production—and you promised, on your word of honor, not to betray him by word or writing, no matter what should happen. Is this true?

Keife. [*Drawing back.*] My dear Miss——

Nancy. I am married!

Keife. Then, my dear Madame—what relation are you to Stanley Thorn?

Nancy. [*After looking round cautiously—then drawing her chair closer.*] Stanley Thorn is myself.

Keife. [*Starting up, crosses, L.*] By Jove!

Nancy. [*Getting excited by degrees.*] Listen to me, and I'll explain everything. I am married. I love my husband devotedly. But I love to write—to see myself in print; above all, I'm mad to see what I have written acted and spoken on the stage by real flesh-and-blood actors. My husband is one of the very smartest and cleverest of men in the world, but he don't understand my passion. I have had to keep my secret, and I must conquer him by a great success or suffer defeat in silence. You wrote to me that you had secured a reading for

my—for our play, then that it was accepted, then that it was in rehearsal, then that it would be played on the 24th, that's to-night! Since then I've been mad with anxiety and suspense. I can't eat, I can't sleep, I couldn't wait to read of it in the morning papers—I must know all about it at once, to-night, on the spot, at the theatre. You must take me. We are partners in its fate. You must sit by my side until all is over.

Keife. [*Crosses, R.*] Excuse me, Madame, I can't do anything of the kind.

Nancy. I am stopping at the Windsor Hotel under an assumed name, so nobody knows me.

Keife. But I'm engaged to be married, and everybody knows that fact.

Nancy. I can't see that that makes a particular difference.

Keife. You can't! May I tell my *fiancée* who you are?

Nancy. [*Alarmed.*] Not a word before the end of the performance. I have your word of honor.

Keife. But the happiness of my life is at stake.

Nancy. So is mine.

Keife. This is absurd! If I had known that Stanley Thorn was— [*Crosses, L.*]

Brasher. [*Outside.*] That looks like it!

Nancy. Sh! [*Listens.*] I hear voices in the next room.

Keife. Very probable.

Griffing. [*Outside.*] That's more like it!

Brasher. [*Outside.*] Let me see!

Nancy. [*Approaches door.*] That voice! [*Starts.*] Heavens, it cannot be! My—my husband!

Keife. Your husband! With my jailer! Things are improving.

Nancy. If he finds me here, there'll be a tragedy. He is absolutely deaf to reason when his jealousy is aroused. We must go!

Keife. [*Crosses, R., avoiding her, walks round chair, she following him.*] You must, certainly.

Nancy. Would you let me go alone? Your partner, too! A defenceless woman in a strange place! Come, take me back to my hotel!

Keife. [*Crosses, L., dodging round table.*] I won't go to your hotel.

Nancy. You must! I have a thousand things to ask you that I'm dying to know.

Brasher. [*Outside.*] It's not there!

Griffing. [*Outside.*] Oh, we're not half through.

Nancy. [*Starts.*] Some one's coming! Let us go!
[*Seizes O'KEIFE'S arm.*]

Keife. [*Crosses, R., drops into chair, R. C.*] But I have no hat.

Nancy. Here's one! [*Seizes BRASHER'S hat from table, and puts it on his head.*] They're coming! Fly! [*Drags him off, C.*]

Brasher. [*Enters, R., excitedly.*] What do you keep that rubbish on hand for, when it's no use? [*GRIFFING follows him in.*] We've lost precious time, I tell you! [*Stops suddenly, and sniffs about him.*]

Griffing. What are you doing?

Brasher. Don't you smell anything?

Griffing. [*Sniffs, turning round to R.*] No! Yes! It's jessamine.

Brasher. My wife's favorite perfume!

Griffing. Your wife's!

Brasher. She's been here!

Griffing. [*Suddenly exultant.*] She has! [*Rushes to KEIFE'S room, darts in—utters a cry, then re-enters.*] Gone! Both gone! Never mind! We're on the track!

Brasher. [*Crosses, R.*] On the track! [*Rolling up his sleeves and throwing back his coat-collar.*]

Griffing. We'll find 'em both! Come on!

Brasher. Where the devil's my hat? Some one's stolen my hat!

Griffing. Never mind your hat; keep your head! We've got 'em! Aha! And I've got you, young man, tight.
[*Drags BRASHER off.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Parlor No. 117, Windsor Hotel. The door c. leads to the corridor. Doors R. and L. lead off into other rooms, though there are bolts on both. The bolt on the door L. is drawn; the door R. is closed, and a handsome sofa partly covers it. Cabinets and other articles of furniture about the apartment. Pictures on the walls. Divan and table, c.; easy-chairs, R.*

At rise of curtain the stage is deserted. After a short pause knocking is heard softly at door L. It is repeated two or three times. At last the door opens a little, and ORIANA puts in her head.

Oriana. Anybody at home? [*Enters and looks around.*]
Nobody here!

Daisy. [*Enters after her. She is in street-dress.*] Has she gone out!

Oriana. The hall-porter said he hadn't the key, so the lady must be in.

Daisy. [*Crosses up to door c. ORIANA gets to L.*] She may have taken the key with her. [*Goes to door c. and tries to open it.*] Locked!

Oriana. What a pity! I would have liked you to make her acquaintance. She's a charming woman!

Daisy. What's her name?

Oriana. Well, really now—I don't know.

Daisy. When did you meet her?

Oriana. At breakfast, in the dining-room, down-stairs. We were at the same table, and got into conversation. Her manner captivated mother and me, and when we discovered we had adjoining rooms she proposed to leave the door between our rooms unlocked, so we could enjoy each other's company during our stay.

Daisy. That's very imprudent. There are so many interesting strangers who are very dangerous people.

Oriana. I won't let you insult my latest friend. [*Crosses, R.*] Let's return to mamma!

Daisy. [*Holding her back.*] As we're here, let's stay and

have our chat out. I have not told you yet that I——
[*Sighs.*]

Oriana. That you what?

Daisy. [*Sighs.*] Something has happened!

Oriana. What?

Daisy. [*Sighs.*] I've lost something.

Oriana. [*Looking for the things.*] Your locket?

Daisy. [*Sighs, turns a little away.*] If that were all!

Oriana. Your watch!

Daisy. [*Another step away.*] Oh! more, much more!

Oriana. Your diamond-ring?

Daisy. Oh, pshaw—can't you guess? [*Crosses, R.*]

Oriana. I can't imagine for the life of me.

Daisy. Indeed! You think you are the only girl that can fall in love.

Oriana. Oh! it is your heart you have lost. [*Laughs.*]
Who is the finder? Has he elaimed his reward?

Daisy. [*Rattling off.*] I'll tell you all about it. [*Both on divan.*] You know him! We met him at Saratoga—Captain Renseller. Don't you remember—last summer?

Oriana. [*L.*] What does your papa say to it all?

Daisy. Oh, of course, papa's opposed. He wants me to have that creature, Siksey Stockslow—and has forbidden Paul the house; but Paul hit on a capital scheme. He thought of your Keife, and he became his old college-chum immediately, and now they're inseparable.

Oriana. So my Keife is in the plot.

Daisy. Oh, he's a perfect darling. [*ORIANA grows uneasy.*] But stop—before I forget it—he wants us to go to the theatre to-night to see the new play.

Oriana. The new play? That's strange! [*Crosses, R.*] You're the second person who has spoken of the new play to me.

Daisy. The second?

Oriana. My unknown friend here mentioned it at breakfast. Now I remember, she got quite animated about it.

Daisy. Indeed! Do you know I don't like all this? [*Rising.*]

Oriana. Why?

Daisy. How does the play concern her? Your O'Keife is the author.

Oriana. No, it's anonymous—she told us.

Daisy. Well, he betrayed himself to me.

Oriana. You must be mistaken, dear. Mr. O'Keife is a well-known author. Why should he conceal his name, when publicity would help the piece? [*Crosses, L.*]

Daisy. I'm not mistaken at all—and what I want to know is, how this person here came to be interested in it? I hope she isn't an old flame of Mr. O'Keife's.

Oriana. [*Alarmed.*] Daisy, you frighten me; I feel a darting pain right through my heart. Can he have deceived me?

Daisy. There certainly is a mystery.

Oriana. No, I won't mistrust him. He never loved a creature before he met me.

Daisy. Oh! of course.

Oriana. Would you suspect your Paul?

Daisy. That's a different thing. [*ORIANA tosses her head and crosses, R.*] My Paul's a soldier, and soldiers are more reliable than authors.

Mrs. Dangery. [*Outside.*] Oriana! Daisy! [*Enters, L. D.*] What are you doing in here?

Daisy. We are gossiping, auntie.

Mrs. Dangery. What! in your neighbor's room?—in her absence?

Oriana. She won't object.

Mrs. Dangery. [*Crosses, C.*] I'm expecting my brother. He'll never come up here. We must see him in the parlor. So come with me at once.

Daisy. [*Crosses, C.*] We'll go down by the elevator. It's such a heavenly feeling to glide down. I wish we lived at a hotel, if only for the elevator.

Mrs. Dangery. Daisy—you're a baby! Well, come, let us go and glide. [*Exits, L. D.*]

Daisy. [*To ORIANA, who stands lost in thought.*] Have I distressed you, coz?

Oriana. [*Embracing her.*] Oh, no! but I can't get to-night's play out of my head. [*They exeat, L. D.*]

The stage remains empty for a moment. Then a key is heard grating in the lock of C. door; the door opens; then NANCY and O'KEIFE enter. The latter reels in, almost crushed in spirits. NANCY takes the key out of the lock, inserts it on the inside, closes and locks the door. O'KEIFE staggers down to divan, and sinks on it, laying the white hat on table, C., as he passes down. NANCY lays aside her wrap and hat, and confronts O'KEIFE.

Nancy. [*On entering.*] Here we are! [*Coming to O'KEIFE.*] What's the matter?

O'Keife. [*On divan.*] O, nothing! I'm out of breath. You simply flew up-stairs—and I had to fly after you.

Nancy. [R.] I shun the elevator. It's easier to avoid observers on the stairways. They are generally deserted.

Keife. What on earth had we to hide for?

Nancy. Remember the danger. My husband has evidently suspected something, and has followed me. I know him. [Wrings her hands.] He's cruel! cruel!

Keife. [On divan.] Very. He declines to be deceived and blindfolded. These husbands are really absurd in their pretensions.

Nancy. If he learns that you and I have business with one another, unknown to him, and finds us together, what shall we tell him? [Crosses, L.]

Keife. [Resolutely, rising.] Let us see him at once, and tell him the truth.

Nancy. Not before the play is over. Remember your promise.

Keife. If he finds us first, he'll listen to nothing. What will he think? Now, you know, you are rather a good-looking woman.

Nancy. And you're not such an ugly-looking man.

Keife. Thank you! Now, what do such a couple generally seek in each other's society?

Nancy. [Laughs.] Love, of course. [Crosses, R., laughing loudly.]

Keife. Don't laugh; I'm serious.

Nancy. [Thoughtfully.] You're right; he'll believe the worst.

Keife. He won't stand it.

Nancy. He'll be furious.

Keife. And very properly.

Nancy. He'll proceed to extremities.

Keife. Shoot me first, and allow you to explain afterward.

Nancy. [Fiercely.] Well, wouldn't you?

Keife. Don't mention it. [Sinks on divan, c.]

Nancy. [Sits beside him, takes his hand, and strokes it.] Are you afraid, my dear partner?

Keife. [R.] I wouldn't be if I deserved it—but I don't.

Nancy. [Strokes his hand.] Calm yourself.

Keife. Don't take hold of my hand—it makes me feel as if I ought to be shot.

Nancy. [Takes his hand again.] Let us look at it calmly. [Sits closer beside him—he edges off.] The city is wide, and days might elapse before he finds a trace of me. Meanwhile, the veil falls to-night with the curtain, and then we can lift our heads in the proud consciousness of innocence.

Keife. I hope we may. [Starts up.]

Nancy. [*Retaining his hand.*] Now tell me about our play? Does it promise well?

Keife. Yes—yes—I think it'll be an immense success.

Nancy. [*Greatly delighted, and forgetting her fear.*] Tell me all about it. [*Pulls him down beside her.*] Oh! if you only knew how every word thrills me.

Keife. [*Growing enthusiastic, and also forgetting his fears.*] Yes, we're on the eve of a great victory.

Nancy. Do they think the plot a good one? What do they say about it?

Keife. The manager tells me that the critics are racking their brains to discover the author. Every one asks: "Why don't he reveal himself?" "Is it a man or a woman?"

Nancy. [*Clasps her hands.*] It's lovely! Oh! I'd like to be a little mouse and listen to all their talk. How does the love-scene in the third act go?

Keife. Oh! that's grand! Grand!

Nancy. Remember, that's by me.

Keife. I can compliment you on that scene. Every word is a spark—every breath is fire. There's an atmosphere of passion pervading it through and through.

Nancy. To write like that one must *feel* it.

Keife. By Jove! A certain husband is to be envied.

Nancy. And the situation at the end of the fourth act, will that take?

Keife. Oh! that sensation will make a great hit. That's mine, you know.

Nancy. Yes, yes. And the ladies! I do hope they'll dress well. If they wear anything unbecoming, it will ruin the whole piece.

Keife. Oh! they won't. The manager pays, and they don't stint themselves a bit, you may be sure of that.

Nancy. And the person that plays my heroine, is she young and pretty?

Keife. Oh! charming! The most dashing creature you ever saw.

Nancy. I hope she's not too lively. The character represents a woman of languid intensity—emotional strength, with apparent physical weakness, you know.

Keife. Oh! she'll do it to the life. Looks as if she were going to faint away in every scene.

Nancy. Mercy! I hope she won't—the part requires lasting powers.

Keife. She's got 'em! She's as strong as a horse.

Nancy. Oh! I wish I were seeing them all acting now. I long for to-night like a child. [*Takes his hand caressingly.*]

Keife. [*Drawing his hand away.*] If we are to do any more plays together we must consult by letter. This sort of thing is too dangerous. [*Rising.*]

Nancy. [*Laughing.*] You're a perfect boy!

Keife. You may laugh. You're married! I have my wife to earn yet, and by the strictest circumspection.

Nancy. Oh, yes. You told me. You're engaged—is she handsome?

Keife. Very. A different style from you—but in my opinion better designed for lasting happiness. [*Sits again.*]

Nancy. How strange life is. [*Going to take his hand, he withdraws it.*] Here we are sitting together—I a loving wife, you a faithful *fiancé*—conspiring like a couple of guilty plotters! It's lovely, isn't it?

Keife. [*Smilingly.*] Well, it's certainly not disagreeable. [*About to take her hand. A knock is heard at c. d. They start, and stand staring at door. Pause, then another knock.*]

Nancy. [*Softly.*] Some one is knocking.

Keife. [*Whispering.*] So it seems.

Nancy. [*Same.*] Shall we open?

Keife. [*Same.*] Perhaps it's one of the bell-boys. Ask him what he wants.

Nancy. You mustn't be astonished if he tells that I registered as Mrs. O'Keife.

Keife. [*Staggering back.*] What in Heaven's name did you do that for, eh? [*Knock.*]

Nancy. I couldn't think of any other name, and I had to act in a hurry. [*Another knock heard.*] Sh! [*Finger to lips to KEIFE, and she asks softly.*] Who is it?

Brasher. [*Outside.*] Nancy!

Nancy. [*Staggers back, and faintly.*] My husband!

Keife. [*In alarm sinks on divan.*] This is a nice mess!

Brasher. [*Outside.*] It is I, your husband. Don't you know your husband?

Keife. [*Low, stopping her as she gets near c. v.*] Don't let him in! For Heaven's sake, don't let him in! [*Knock again, and he runs down front frightened.*]

Nancy. [*Motions KEIFE to be silent, then.*] You here! What brings you here?

Brasher. [*Angrily.*] Open the door, or I'll break it in!

Nancy. Ye-es; wait a minute. [*Goes to door, L., looks off, and motions KEIFE to enter, L., and he totters feebly off, with a desperate glance at NANCY. She then goes to c. door, and opens it coldly.*] You may come in.

BRASHER rushes madly in, leaving a black hat which he wears on chair near door. Looks about in all corners, and then confronts NANCY, breathing heavily.

Nancy. [Very defiant.] Well?

Brasher. [R.] Well?

Nancy. [Same.] What's the meaning of this?

Brasher. You have deceived me!

Nancy. [Calm.] About what?

Brasher. [Shows her the envelope.] Look at this!

Nancy. A burnt envelope. [Recognizes it, then disdainfully.] You have been searching through my papers. [He takes stage, R.] Shame!

Brasher. [Calming himself.] Where is that sick relation you came to visit?

Nancy. [After pause, turns on him.] Dead!

Brasher. Since when?

Nancy. She never lived.

Brasher. I thought so! [Crosses, L.] Then why did you leave home? Why did you deceive me? Nancy, answer me. The blood is mounting to my head. My eyes see a thousand sparks, and a million bees seem humming in my brain. Something terrible will happen! [Sinks onto divan.]

Nancy. [Goes to table, pours out a goblet of water, and offers it to him.] Drink that! Cool off!

Brasher. You are making fun of my anger.

Nancy. I know what's best for you! [Imperiously.] Drink! [BRASHER involuntarily puts the glass to his lips.] Aren't you afraid I've poisoned it? [Scornfully.]

Brasher. [Puts glass on table.] If you had, it would have been a relief to me. [Crosses, R.]

Nancy. Are you done with your accusations? [He sinks into chair, R.] Well, I confess I have deceived you. [He starts up.] I had to come to the city. I had to come alone, and I needed a pretext, and I thought of a sick relation. I have a secret. You have a right to know it—for you are my husband, I shall not keep it from you. [He advances eagerly to her.] To-morrow you shall know all. Perhaps to-night. Are you satisfied?

Brasher. Nancy, only tell me.

Nancy. Not a syllable now. To-night everything. What have you been thinking of me? Haven't I loved you? Haven't I made you happy? And now, because I keep a secret from you for a few hours you think the very worst of me. Oh, Tippy, Tippy! you have wounded me deeply. [Turns from him with a sob, sinks on the divan.]

Brasher. [*Half won over, tenderly.*] Now, Nancy, don't cry.

Nancy. [*Crying.*] I can't help it. You see how I'm distressed. I've missed you dreadfully since I left home, and here you break in upon me without a word of preparation, and overwhelm me with insulting suspicions. [*Sobs.*]

Brasher. I'm wrong! I know it! Don't go on so, Nancy. [*Pause.*] I apologize. [*Falls on his knees.*] You did perfectly right.

Nancy. [*Tenderly, her arm over his neck.*] You great, clever, good old goose. Did you think I was running away from you? [*Draws him beside her on divan.*] Come, now, sit down sensibly. By and by you'll see I couldn't act otherwise. [*Head on his shoulder.*] Do you still love me?

Brasher. [*Catches her head, in ecstasy.*] Do I? [*Holds back.*] That perfume! How did your jessamine get into old Griffing's house? It was that set me on your track. [*Starts up.*]

Nancy. That's part of my secret.

Brasher. [*Advances to her.*] Is that old fellow in it?

Nancy. Wait until to-night. Don't torment me with questions I cannot answer. [*Embraces him.*] We're reunited—we've embraced—we are proof against every suspicion! Very well! Now, until midnight I have no husband. I'm single once more, and you're a bachelor, just as you were when you came, saw, and conquered poor me.

Brasher. [*Rises, crosses, R.*] You single and I a bachelor again—w-what do you want me to do?

Nancy. Why, you must go away, of course, and not come near me until night. Where is your sense of propriety?

Brasher. [*Crossing, L.*] Oh! hang it, this is like play-acting, and you know how I hate and despise a sensible woman doing that stuff.

Nancy. It's for your happiness, too. And now please go.

Brasher. Go! Where in thunder can I go? [*Stage, R.*]

Nancy. Go walk about. I must be alone. Do you still mistrust me?

Brasher. No. But it's hard not to. [*Takes up the hat which O'KEIFE left.*]

Nancy. [*Kissing him.*] Until midnight, then.

Brasher. [*Resigned.*] All right! [*Turns the hat mechanically, and suddenly recognizes it—flares up.*] What's this?

Nancy. What's what?

Brasher. [*In fury, showing hat.*] Look here!

Nancy. Well?

Brasher. I lost this hat at Griffing's, and now I find it here. [*Stage, R.*]

Nancy. [*Aside.*] Oh! dear——

Brasher. You've got a man somewhere about here. [*Searches room again; up R. and down L.*]

Nancy. Well! This is the last straw! I was at Griffing's, as you know, and I found your hat there, and I took it to confront you with as a proof of your jealousy and mistrust.

Brasher. To confront me with it? I like that! [*Pointing R. and L.*] What doors are those?

Nancy. They are ordinary hotel-doors, I suppose, and locked.

Brasher. [*Getting round to L.*] I'll break them open.

Nancy. [*Terrified.*] Do! Make a disturbance! Rouse the whole hotel, and accuse your wife before the servants. What do you care for my reputation? What do you care if our happiness receives a blow from which it can never recover? You don't love me, you never loved me! [*Gradually going from sobs to tears.*] You are trying to bring about a separation. Go on. I won't stop you! I can do nothing! [*Sits, c., and weeps.*]

Brasher. [*Controlling himself with an effort.*] Very well, I'll go! But I don't believe you, and I think you're play-acting to gain time. I know there's a man about here somewhere, and I'll find him—for I'll watch in the passage, and shan't take my eyes from your door. [*Going to door.*] When he comes out, don't you follow, for it'll be no place for ladies! [*Exits, slamming the door after him.*]

Nancy. It's a shame to worry him. [*Locks door.*]

Keife. [*Rushes in violently from L. D., and stands against it.*] Oh, Lord! how's this going to end?

Nancy. What's the matter now?

Keife. Somebody's coming into that room.

Nancy. You look frightened to death.

Keife. It's enough to turn a man's hair white. Just as your esteemed husband was bellowing his loudest in here, I heard a key put into the other door of that room, and then a voice which made my heart jump into my throat, the voice of the woman I'm to marry.

Nancy. [*Astonished.*] Miss Dangery?

Keife. Yes; Oriana. Imagine my position. In here, your husband ready to kill me; and my *fiancée* coming in there to discover me hiding and cast me off forever. It was a delightful alternative—finally I preferred certain death, and here I am. [*Crosses, R.*]

Nancy. You're not safe now. Your Oriana may step in here any moment.

Keife. [*Going, c.*] I can get out that way.

Nancy. No, you can't! Othello is outside waiting for you.

Keife. Thanks for the cheerful information. Can you suggest a solution of the difficulty?

Nancy. I have an idea. [*Goes to door, R.*] Help me.

Keife. What are you going to do? [*Goes to her.*]

Nancy. Don't you see? Move this sofa from the door.

Keife. [*After assisting her.*] And now, what?

Nancy. [*After unbolting the door.*] Now knock. Perhaps the occupant is in the room.

Keife. It's a last hope! [*Knocks.*]

Nancy. They seem to be deaf. Knock again. [*He does so.*]

Stockslow. [*From the other side of the door.*] Hullo, hullo, there! Who's making that little noise?

Nancy. Please unlock your door?

Stockslow. [*Inside, titters.*] What for?

Nancy. A lady wishes to see you immediately.

Stockslow. [*Inside.*] Ah, very well, I'll move my little bureau first. [*A piece of furniture is heard moving.*]

Keife. It seems to me I know that little voice. [*Gets, L.*]

Stockslow. [*Enters, R. D.*] Now, ma'am! [*Sees NANCY.*] By Jove, a pretty little lady!

Keife. [*Aside.*] The stock-broker. [*Aloud and embarrassed.*] The fact is, Mr. Stockslow— [*Crossing, c.*]

Stockslow. Oh! was it *you* knocked?

Nancy. [*To KEIFE.*] Introduce me to the gentleman—brother.

Keife. [*Puzzled.*] Eh!—what? Bro-brother?

Stockslow. [*Crossing, c.*] Oh! you're his little sister?

Nancy. My poor brother is a little confused. You see, he is in danger of being surprised here, and can't make his escape because the doors are watched. So I took the liberty of appealing to you to ask if you would give him shelter for a short time.

Stockslow. Oh! [*Begins to smile.*] I begin to see.

Nancy. Do you understand?

Stockslow. Perfectly. [*Titters.*] Of course it would be very dangerous for little brother to be caught with little sister. [*Titters.*]

Nancy. [*Aside.*] Now I've ruined everything.

Keife. [*Aside, down R.*] She makes the worst blunders I ever knew.

Nancy. At all events, you'll grant my request?

Stockslow. Of course ; one little fellow must oblige another little fellow. I may have a little sister myself some day. [*Digs KEIFE's ribs.*] Come, brother !

Keife. [*Furious.*] Stop that, sir. [*Stockslow gets on his R., and repeats the action, tittering.*] I resent your conjectures, sir.

Stockslow. [*To NANCY.*] Funny little brother ! [*Digs him in the side again. O'KEIFE starts away to L.*]

Nancy. Go—go—gentlemen ! [*Crosses, c.*] Don't waste precious time.

Stockslow. Bye-bye, little sister—if you want another little brother, think of me. [*Exits, R. D.*]

Keife. I'll go with you. [*Crosses, R.*] But I tell you you're entirely mistaken. [*Stockslow laughs, outside.*] His mouth must be stopped, or old Griffing will know everything. Oh, Oriana, Oriana, you are floating away from me—I feel it ! [*Exits, R. D.*]

Nancy. [*Closing the door.*] I'm afraid I've made a bad mess of it. [*Knocking heard at door, L.*] But it was high time ; someone is coming. Come in ! [*ORIANA and DAISY enter, L. D.*]

Oriana. Are you in at last ? I've told my cousin so much about you, that she insisted on coming. [*Introducing.*] Miss Daisy Griffing—Mrs.—Mrs.—I've really forgotten your name, do you know.

Nancy. [*Pretending not to hear, crosses, c.*] If your cousin resembles you, I have made two charming acquaintances.

Oriana. You're very kind.

Daisy. [*Aside.*] Strange she won't mention her name !

Mrs. Dangery. [*Enters, L., followed by GRIFFING.*] Fair neighbor, my brother wants to be introduced to you—to thank you for your attentions to us.

Griffing. [*Crosses, c.*] Madame, I—— [*Recognizes her.*] The devil !

Nancy. [*Aside, crossing, R.*] How unfortunate ! [*Bows.*]

Mrs. Dangery. Why, what's the matter, Ebenezer ? You stand there thunderstruck. Has her beauty overcome you ? [*Aside to him.*] Would you like her photograph, too ? [*ORIANA gets round to DAISY.*]

Griffing. 'Sh ! [*To NANCY.*] It's no empty phrase, ma'am, if I say I'm awfully glad to meet you. [*Sniffing the air.*] Jessamine ! got her at last ! [*Rubs his hands.*]

Nancy. I'm happy to make your acquaintance.

Griffing. To make it ? Is that the right word ?

Daisy. So you've met before ?

Nancy. [*Quickly.*] Your father is mistaken ; we have not

met before. [*Volubly ; crosses to MRS. DANGERY.*] Have you done much shopping yet, Mrs. Dangery?

Mrs. Dangery. No ; I've only paid a few visits so far, Mrs.—Mrs.—dear me, do you know I've forgotten your name.

Nancy. [*Laughing.*] It's wonderful how time passes in a large city. We country people really live much longer.

Oriana. [*Aside.*] She won't give her name.

Waiter. [*Knocks at door, enters from L. D., with a card on a salver.*] Scuse me. I found nobody in No. 115. But there's a lady down-stairs who axed me to bring up dis yer card to dat room.

Mrs. Dangery. [*Takes card.*] Let me see ! [*Reads.*] “Mrs. Snooksberry !” How glad I am ! [*To NANCY.*] Please excuse us. An old friend. [*To WAITER.*] Show the lady up. Come, children. [*Exits after WAITER, L. D.*]

Daisy. [*To ORIANA, as they go off.*] It's very strange. [*They exeunt, after looking back suspiciously at NANCY.*]

Griffing. [*Closing the door after them, laughing, and then facing NANCY.*] So I've found you out.

Nancy. [*Straightens herself up, R.*] What do you mean by that?

Griffing. Oh ! you may save yourself the trouble of denying.

Nancy. What do you mean by this tone, sir?

Griffing. I know everything—Mrs. Tippy Brasher.

Nancy. Everything? Every what thing?

Griffing. Your husband is outside.

Nancy. I know that.

Griffing. He is infuriated—wild.

Nancy. [*Smiling.*] No. I've tamed him. [*Crosses, L.*]

Griffing. Don't you think that's rather strong?

Nancy. I am not afraid of anyone.

Griffing. Not of me either, perhaps.

Nancy. Of you—not at all.

Griffing. You forget, I know your secret.

Nancy. What secret?

Griffing. Your relation with Mr. Keife O'Keife.

Nancy. Keife O'Keife? Who is he, pray?

Griffing. [*Aside.*] By Jiminy, she's bold ! Awful bold ! [*Admiringly.*] So you didn't call at my house this morning? You didn't inquire for Mr. O'Keife? and you didn't want to see him privately? You didn't leave an odor of jessamine in my parlor? You didn't—

Nancy. Didn't—didn't—didn't ! Anything more? My dear sir, it's plain to see that you know in reality nothing, and that you are trying to fish.

Griffing. Very clever ! But it won't do ! [*Jovially.*] Come—suppose we have a little chat ! Sit down side by side, and listen quietly to an old and worthy person. [*Sits on divan.*] Will you, please ?

Nancy. [*Aside.*] Old fox ! But wait ! [*Aloud.*] I obey. [*Sits beside him.*]

Griffing. Your husband is my friend. You left the poor fellow under false pretences, and he has every reason to be anxious and suspicious. But he loves you. It's easy to make a lover believe black is white. Now, *I'll* undertake to convince him that you are perfectly innocent and blameless—on one condition.

Nancy. [*Pretending deep emotion.*] My dear old friend—let me say father !—if you would but do that !

Griffing. I think I can manage it. [*Aside.*] Her touch is like an electric battery. I feel a tingling in every finger. [*Aloud and smilingly.*] Yes, I think I can convince him.

Nancy. [*Pretends overwhelming joy and takes his hands in hers.*] You're an angel !

Griffing. I am. [*Suggers up to her.*]

Nancy. [*Drawing off.*] And your conditions ?

Griffing. Only a trifle. In return for my aid, you must confess everything connected with that hypocrite, O'Keefe—and if necessary, furnish me with the proofs.

Nancy. What's that for ?

Griffing. That's my business. Service for service !

Nancy. [*Aside.*] Wait, old gentleman, I'll lead you a pretty chase. [*Aloud and as if ashamed.*] You can't really want me to tell you—

Griffing. I'll make it easy for you. I'll ask and you'll answer. [*Aside.*] She's a whole perfumery counter.

Nancy. [*Eyes lowered.*] Ask me, then.

Griffing. You have known that rascal for some time ?

Nancy. Yes.

Griffing. Since when ?

Nancy. [*Same.*] For months.

Griffing. You have corresponded ? [*She nods.*] The villain ! Are you in his power ? [*She nods.*] The scoundrel ! Why don't you cast him off ?

Nancy. I cannot.

Griffing. Why not ?

Nancy. [*As before.*] I can't tell you.

Griffing. Whisper in my ear. [*She does so ; it tickles, and he rubs his ear.*] Louder. [*She repeats.*] You tickle me. [*She repeats. He rises.*] I can't hear ; but go on.

Nancy. I dare not. [*Rises, R.*]

Griffing. [*Excited.*] Come. You promised to tell me everything. [*Up to her, slyly.*] Have you any of your photographs with you?

Nancy. No.

Griffing. That's a pity.

Nancy. Why?

Griffing. [*Stops his chest.*] Pull up, Ebenezer; beware of —the vortex. [*Coldly.*] No matter. Can you furnish me proof of all this?

Nancy. The whole dreadful tragedy will be revealed to-night.

Griffing. [*Appalled.*] A tragedy? [*Crosses, R.*]

Nancy. [*Seizing his wrist.*] To-night! at midnight!

Griffing. [*Staggered.*] Gracious Heavens! [*NANCY laughs in his face.*] What are you laughing at?

Nancy. [*Laughing.*] I wish you could see yourself now! [*Laughs.*] You must manage more cleverly, old gentleman, if you want to pump me.

Griffing. [*Aside, R.*] I see. She's changed her mind. But it won't do. [*Aloud.*] It won't do. I know enough, and I pity that poor husband of yours.

Nancy. [*Sternly.*] If you become impertinent, sir, I'll show you the door.

Mrs. Dangery. [*Enters L. D., followed by ORIANA and DAISY.*] My visitor has gone. Come, brother, you've had a long tête-à-tête; we mustn't weary our friend any longer.

Nancy. Oh, we've had a delightful chat. I don't know when I've enjoyed myself so much.

Griffing. [*Aside.*] No, I don't think you do.

Captain. [*Entering from L. C.*] Excuse me, but I found nobody in No. 115.

Daisy. [*In delight.*] Paul!

Griffing. [*Angrily.*] What do you want here, sir?

Captain. I did not come to ask after your health, sir. [*To MRS. DANGERY.*] I was looking over the register below, and saw your name. You were so kind to me at Saratoga that I couldn't deny myself the pleasure of paying my respects. I hope you are very well. And Miss Oriana too!

Mrs. Dangery. Thank you, yes. [*To NANCY.*] Allow me [*Introducing.*]—Captain Paul Renseller.

Nancy. [*Bows.*] Charmed!

Griffing. [*To DAISY and ORIANA, aside.*] You must leave this person's room at once.

Daisy. We are not afraid, papa.

Captain. [*To NANCY.*] Pardon me, madam, I didn't quite catch your name.

Nancy. [*Not heeding.*] Won't you be seated, Mrs. Dangery [*Crosses, c.*] and young ladies? [*Crosses past* MRS. DANGERY.]

Oriana. [*Aside to GRIFFING.*] Isn't it strange she won't tell her name? Do you know her?

Griffing. Yes. She is your O'Keife's old sweetheart. [*ORIANA screams and half faints in chair, L.*]

Mrs. Dangery. [*Runs to her.*] What has happened?

Nancy. [*Also running to her.*] She has fainted.

Mrs. Dangery. Water, somebody! [*NANCY pours out water.*]

Oriana. [*Convulsively.*] Take me away from here! I'm choking!

Mrs. Dangery. Come to our room. [*Taking her in her arms and going L.*]

Nancy. [*Runs ahead.*] I'll open the window. [*Exits, L. D.*]

Mrs. Dangery. My poor child! [*Exits, L. D., with ORIANA.*]

Daisy. [*Going L.*] Pa, what was it you said to her?

Captain. [*Following round table.*] Perhaps I can be of assistance. [*Also going to L. D.*]

Griffing. Daisy, stay here. [*Putting her to R.*]

Daisy. They may want me.

Griffing. Stay where you are.

Captain. [*Turning back at door.*] Perhaps I'd better stay where I am, too. A man would only be in the way.

Griffing. Here, you; what do you want here?

Captain. Allow me to ask what you want here. We're both on somebody else's premises.

Griffing. You persecute my daughter.

Captain. Miss Daisy, do I persecute you? [*Crosses, c.*]

Daisy. Not at all.

Captain. You hear, sir! [*Whispers to DAISY.*] I have a letter for you.

Daisy. [*Whispers, same.*] So have I—for you.

Griffing. [*Crosses, c.*] Here! here! no whispering there.

Captain. Make your mind easy, sir. I'm not actuated by selfish motives. My poor abused foster-brother has written a long epistle to Miss Oriana, and I undertook to deliver it. Please hand this to your cousin, Miss Daisy. [*Hands DAISY a letter quickly which she seizes and hides.*]

Griffing. [*Steps between them.*] What a dear self-sacrificing friend you are. My daughter's no lamp-post—I mean no post-box, sir. [*To DAISY.*] Give me that letter. [*To CAPTAIN.*] Do your own letter-carrying, sir.

Daisy. [*Hesitating while changing the letters.*] But, pa—

Griffing. Out with it. [*DAISY, with apparent reluctance, hands him her own letter, which he passes over to the CAPTAIN.*] Here is your epistle back again. [*With a sneer.*] If you want to get ahead of me, young fellow, you must get up earlier in the morning. [*Turns up stage.*]

Captain. [*As he looks at the letter, and pockets it.*] Thank you. I believe I did oversleep myself this morning.

Griffing. Now, don't you think we'd better leave? We're on somebody else's premises long enough.

Captain. My very thought.

Griffing. As my future son-in-law, little Stockslow, stops at this hotel, somewhere along this corridor, I think, I'll pay him a visit. Daisy, go to your aunt; make the Captain a nice bow and go.

Daisy. Good-morning, Captain. [*Aside.*] I have his letter! [*Exits, L. D.*]

Griffing. [*Points to door, c.*] If you please.

Captain. After you.

Griffing. I don't like to lose sight of you. [*Unlocks the door, c.*]

Captain. You shall never, as long as you live. [*Exits, c.*]

Griffing. Conceited puppy! [*Exits, R. C. Immediately GRIFFING is off, BRASHER utters a loud, fierce cry and exclaims: "I've got you."*]

Captain. [*Outside.*] But, sir!

Griffing. [*Outside.*] My dear Brasher! [*Captain dashes in, endeavoring to shake BRASHER off. GRIFFING follows, trying to explain.*] This is Captain Renseller, United States Army. [*BRASHER bows an apology and shakes hands with the CAPTAIN, and all three exeunt. BRASHER, last, "I'm wrong this time, but I'll watch 'em and catch 'em yet."*]

Enter ORIANA and NANCY, L. D.

Nancy. You wish to speak with me alone?

Oriana. [*Excited.*] Yes, for I must clear up a terrible suspicion.

Nancy. You alarm me.

Oriana. I'm engaged to be married. Envidable destiny, is it not? I thought so once, for I loved the man of my choice, and believed I was the idol of his thoughts.

Nancy. Calm yourself. [*Both sit.*]

Oriana. [*L.*] I was warned; reminded that men of genius were fickle and inconstant. I remained deaf and blind. But my uncle, who hears and sees everything, only a moment since whispered to me that *it is you he loves*, and not me.

Nancy. Who, your uncle ?

Oriana. No—my lover. [*Rises and crosses, R.*]

Nancy. [*Proudly.*] I permit no one to love me but my husband.

Oriana. Is there such a person ?

Nancy. Well, upon my word.

Oriana. Why are you here ? Why do you speak of that play to-night ?

Nancy. [*Confused.*] The play ?

Oriana. You can't deny you were all on fire about it to us ; and it is his play—you understand—*his* play !

Nancy. His play ! [*Angrily.*] Did he tell you ?

Oriana. Never mind—I know. And now tell me, honestly—as one woman to another—*do you know*, do you love, Keife O'Keife ?

Nancy. [*Decided.*] No.

Oriana. Oh ! Thank you ! Thank you ! [*Grasps her hand—as the door R. is opened wildly, and O'KEIFE rushes in and closes it madly after him, NANCY starts away.*]

O'Keife. Hide me ! Hide me ! Old Griffing is coming into that room. [*Going down to NANCY.*] Hide me quickly ! [*Sees ORIANA, who has dropped NANCY's hands.*] Good Heavens ! [*Stands petrified.*] Oriana !

Oriana. [*At first speechless, then with growing agitation.*] You don't know him ! And yet he rushes into your room and asks you to hide him !

Keife. [*One step forward.*] Oriana !

Oriana. [*Recoiling.*] Don't approach me ! Don't insult me by further attempts at deceit. You have acted your part well for three months ; you must be weary of it at last. Be what you please, and to whom you please ; as for me, all is over between us forever ! [*Exits, L. D., slamming door.*]

Keife. [*About to follow.*] Oriana ! [*Sinks on the tête-à-tête.*]

Griffing. [*Appears in doorway, R., slamming door after him, crosses to KEIFE.*] Stop ! After what has occurred, Mr. O'Keife, you will not be surprised at my requesting you to leave my house. [*Turning to NANCY, who glares at him.*] You will hardly be at a loss for a home.

Keife. [*Exploding.*] I tell you, sir, it's a mistake ! A damnable mistake !

Griffing. Oh ! no. The only mistake was in your supposing that you could hoodwink Ebenezer Griffing. I give you half an hour to go home—pack up and get out.

Keife. [*Going, c., and utterly dejected.*] I'm lost !

Nancy. My poor friend !

Keife. You can save me. Speak one word——

Nancy. To-night.

Keife. To-night it'll be too late. It's almost too late now.
[*Goes, c.*]

Griffing. [*Bursts out laughing, on divan.*] He's dead as a hammer. The husband on the other side of that door. [*Gets, L.* As *KEIFE* is about to open the door, *c.*, it is violently dashed in his face, and *BRASHER* appears with waiter carrying the office register.]

Brasher. Aha! I've found you at last! Your name!

Keife. It's none of your business.

Brasher. Your name!

Nancy. [*R.*] Don't tell him.

Griffing. [*L.*] Keife O'Keife—that's his name.

Brasher. [*Grasping the register.*] I thought so. My wife is registered here as your wife. [*Raises the book to strike. The servants hold him.*] Let me get at him! [*O'KEIFE dodges and crosses, R.* *BRASHER* fires the book, and it strikes *GRIF-FING.*] O Nancy! Nancy!

Nancy. Fly! [*O'KEIFE dashes out of door, c., as BRASHER breaks from NANCY, who has flung her arms about his neck. The other doors open. STOCKSLOW appears, R., and MRS. DANGERY and DAISY appear, L. D.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

The same scene as Act I. Time, evening. Lamp lit on table, c. Not quite half dark. In front of table a large valise open. Several books and pamphlets and rolls of MSS. on the table, and on the floor near it. On the easy-chair are some articles of O'KEIFE's clothing and a large travelling rug of fur or plaid. On sofa, R., is his heavy ulster. O'KEIFE's hat on the table.

O'KEIFE is discovered packing books, etc., in his valise, at c.

O'Keife. [*Scratching his head, after a glance round, while on his knees.*] Everything was in here once, but how am I going to get 'em in again?

Griffing. [*Enters from R. c., with an open letter in his hand; stands a moment, contemplating O'KEIFE.*] Aha! Packing up to move? [O'KEIFE continues his work in silence.] You don't answer! [*Sits R. of table.*]

O'Keife. No.

Griffing. Why not?

O'Keife. You're my enemy.

Griffing. I'm down on hypocrisy, that's all.

Keife. You talk rubbish. [*Continues to pack.*]

Griffing. You wrote this letter to my niece asking for an interview. [O'KEIFE looks up, and then resumes packing.] I might oppose it, but I don't. Your request is granted.

Keife. [*Getting up.*] She consents?

Griffing. She consents to hear what you have to say in exculpation. I'll be present, of course.

Keife. [*With a sneer.*] Of course.

Griffing. The fact is, I'm curious to hear how you will wriggle out of it.

Keife. You've done me injury enough, without adding insult.

Griffing. Now don't froth up. Your guilt is beyond doubt or contradiction. The lady's own confession establishes that.

Keife. What confession? That woman's capable of anything.

Griffing. Now, don't attempt too much. Don't ask my niece for forgiveness, or I may be unable to restrain myself, and demand your correspondence.

Keife. I'll show you every one of her letters.

Griffing. I don't mean her letters ; I mean yours. So take a gentlemanly and respectful leave of Oriana. That's all I'll allow. [*Rises.*]

Keife. [*Angry, rising.*] You've nothing to allow. If you remain, you will sit down and be quiet, for I shall address nothing to you. If you intend to interrupt the conversation whenever you please, I shall decline the interview. [*Crosses, R.*]

Griffing. Oh, I won't interrupt. *I'm only* too anxious to hear everything you've got to say.

Keife. I hold you to that, then, remember !

Griffing. [*Goes to arch, R., and calls off.*] Oriana ! [*ORIANA enters from arch, R.*]

Keife. My dear Oriana !

Oriana. [*Very reserved, L.*] What have you to say to me, sir ?

Griffing. Please to remember that my niece is not your dear Oriana any longer. I want that understood to begin with.

Keife. [*Crosses, c., gently pushing GRIFFING aside ; GRIFFING, staggering, falls on the sofa.*] Miss Dangery, I beg you will ask your uncle to be quiet. His remarks incense me—they make my blood boil, and deprive me of the calmness I wish to observe in speaking to you.

Griffing. [*Crosses, c., to interrupt.*] Well, I——

Oriana. [*To GRIFFING, seriously.*] If I am to remain, I must request you to be silent.

Griffing. [*Testily.*] Well, I'll keep still ; but don't let him presume on his past rights ; they're all gone. [*Looks on from one to the other. KEIFE pushes him back.*]

Oriana. [*To KEIFE.*] Go on, please.

Keife. [*Tenderly and entreating.*] Shall I remind you, Oriana, how we first met—how the same spark of love ignited our hearts together ? Shall I describe the lamb-like patience with which I have endured the refined tortures of that man during the three months I have been under his roof and in his power ?

Griffing. No ! [*Checks himself. KEIFE pushes him back ; he staggers to chair, near fire.*] If I hold in any longer, I'll explode !

Keife. My enemies have wrested the most trivial circumstances to my injury. You have lost faith in me.

Griffing. Small loss ! [*KEIFE looks at him—he changes position, and begins to stir the fire.*]

Keife. You may well ask me, then, what it is I ask of you.

Griffing. [*As before.*] Yes ; that's what we all ask. [*Rattles poker on the bars.*]

Keife. [*As before.*] It is my last request. I ask you to give no thought to me or my affairs until to-morrow morning, to believe nothing you hear or have heard against me until then. After to-night, I shall scatter the calumnies of my enemies as the sun scatters a fog. [*Glares at GRIFFING, who groans and rakes the fire.*] If to-morrow morning I do not stand before you justified in every way—then turn your charming head from me forever, then believe all they tell you of my deceit, and repulse the hand I stretch out to claim you. Say—will you trust in me until to-morrow morning ?

Oriana. [*Has stood with head averted, now turns to him.*] I would gladly—if—

Keife. I entreat you as if I pleaded, not for justice, but for mercy.

Oriana. Well, until to-morrow. Oh ! if I could only bury myself until then, so I might see and hear nothing.

Keife. Thank you ! Thank you ! [*Kisses her hand.*]

Griffing. [*Comes between them, poker in hand.*] Here ! That'll do ! That'll do ! To-morrow morning won't save you. Answer me one little question now : Do you know Nancy Brasher, or do you not ? Have you had dealings with her, or have you not ?

Keife. [*To ORIANA.*] Shall I answer ?

Oriana. [*Calmly.*] Answer nothing.

Griffing. [*Working himself up to fury.*] Perhaps you don't know the jessamine which gives that person's presence its intoxicating perfume ? or the magic of her sparkling conversation ? or the fire of those eyes which she sinks into your very soul ? or the electricity of her fascinating fingers ? or—

Keife. No ; but you seem to know so much that I begin to suspect that you—yourself—

Griffing. [*Coughs.*] How, sir ? Me—I — [*Goes up, raking fire furiously.*]

Oriana. Mr. O'Keife is right, uncle [*crosses, c.*] ; you spent considerable time in the lady's society this afternoon. At all events, your statements are to be received with caution. [*To O'KEIFE.*] Until to-morrow. [*Exits quickly, R. c.*]

Keife. [*Calling after and crossing.*] Until to-morrow !

Griffing. You shall pay me for that last shot. I'll wind the net round and round you before to-morrow.

Keife. Unless you wind yourself up in it, I simply defy you.

Betsy. [*Enters, c.; makes a bolt toward Griffing.*] Young Mr. Sikes Stockslow wants to see Mr. O'Keife. Is it in I'll show him?

Griffing. Of course it's in you'll show him.

Betsy. Very well, sor. [*To STOCKSLOW*] This way, sir. [*Admits STOCKSLOW and exits.*]

Stockslow. Good-day, little papa! Your little servant, brother!

Griffing. Well, out with it. What do you want with him? Let me tell you it won't help you to be too friendly with him.

Keife. [*To GRIFFING, R.*] I believe I have still the right to receive a call here. [*To STOCKSLOW.*] What can I do for you, sir?

Stockslow. Well, it's a very disagreeable little commission, and no money in it for me. But we can't say no when another little chap makes it a point of honor.

Keife. Please come to the point.

Stockslow. You know Mr. Tippy Brasher, I believe?

Keife. Very slightly.

Griffing. [*Sits L. of table.*] That's true! He knows him very slightly.

Stockslow. Well, he thinks there's something between you and little—little—sister, you know. [*Titters.*]

Keife. Does the man want to call me out?

Stockslow. Yes. He wants me to be his little second.

Keife. Stuff.

Stockslow. He's very game stuff. You are to have the choice of little thingembobbies.

Keife. Very good. Say revolvers. Across a handkerchief—to-morrow morning. Handkerchiefs are worn quite small now—less chance of missing each other.

Stockslow. You really accept?

Keife. It would be extremely ill-bred to refuse so polite an attention.

Stockslow. You're too funny! Who's your little friend?

Keife. [*Crosses, c., to GRIFFING.*] Will you oblige me?

Griffing. Certainly not. I'm no little friend of yours. [*Rises.*]

Keife. It's immaterial—arrange the matter entirely as you please, Mr. Stockslow, and let me hear from you to-night.

Stockslow. Then I'm through.

Keife. With me—yes.

Stockslow. He, he ! [*Titters, then crosses, c., to GRIFFING.*] How's Daisy ?

Griffing. Out shopping ! for her wedding. [*Claps him on the shoulder.*] I admire your pluck. I didn't think you had so much fight in you.

Stockslow. Oh ! I don't have to fight.

Griffing. No, but as his second you will have to hold one end of the handkerchief, and as they'll both be shaking a little, you may come in for some of the pepper.

Stockslow. [*Scared, then titters.*] I guess I'll get a little table-cloth. [*Exits, c. r.*]

Griffing. [*To KEIFE.*] Well, I begin to pity you myself. You really are getting into deep water. Well, you'll have to swim for it ; and make your mind easy, I won't jump in after you. [*Exits, r. c.*]

Keife. All's well ! To-morrow will settle everything. When the curtain falls to-night, a weight falls from my heart ; the scales fall from everybody's eyes—Oriana falls to me, and then huzzah for happiness ! [*Resumes his packing, c.*]

Captain. [*Enters, l. c., after looking in.*] How are you, foster-brother ? Nobody here but you ?

Keife. You're just in time to help me move.

Daisy. [*Enters quickly and softly, l. d.*] Mr. Keife, did Paul—Oh, there you are !

Captain. [*Opens his arms.*] Daisy ! Fly to me !

Daisy. [*Bashfully.*] The idea !

Captain. What's the harm ? We're alone. [*Crosses, l. c.*]

Keife. Here, I like that !

Captain. [*Holding DAISY'S hand.*] I'm sorry, O'Keife, but we can't recognize your existence. We don't know when we shall succeed in meeting alone again, and I have very important matters to communicate to Daisy.

Keife. [*Taking his hat.*] My time is limited, but I can go out for five minutes.

Captain. Noble character !

Daisy. [*To KEIFE, bringing him down r.*] No, no—you must remain. [*Takes his hat and puts it down.*] I have no objection, however, to your putting your head occasionally into your valise. [*Gets, r.*]

Keife. All right ! I'll dive into the trunk as often as my necessity for breathing will allow. [*Kneels and resumes packing.*]

Captain. [*To DAISY.*] You read my letter ?

Daisy. Yes ; what was it you had to tell me ?

Captain. You have often wondered, I have no doubt, why I never came out boldly and asked your father for your hand.

Daisy. Well, I thought you knew best when to speak.

Captain. I did, and I was waiting for only one thing. You know how small my pay is. It wouldn't support the smallest mite of a wife in the world.

Daisy. I never thought your pay was an objection.

Captain. It's my only shortcoming. Well, I've written my father all about my love and our distress—and I've just received his answer.

Daisy. [*In fear.*] Oh, dear! what does he say?

Captain. If I drop the army, marry a good wife, and come and live with him, he'll attend to all the rest. Isn't he a father?

Daisy. [*Delighted.*] He consents! Did you mention my name?

Captain. Yes. He told me to give you his love. [*Opens his arms.*] Here it is!

Daisy. [*Looks at KEIFE.*]

Keife. I dive! [*Pops his head in valise.*]

Captain. [*Embracing DAISY, and turning her to his L.*] Daisy! my own!

Daisy. No, I'm not your own yet. There's my pa.

Captain. What objection can he possibly make if I give up my shoulder-straps?

Daisy. I don't know. He's the greatest inventor of objections that ever lived.

Captain. Courage! Before a month's passed we'll be man and wife.

Daisy. It makes me shiver all over. [*Getting away from him.*]

Captain. Warm yourself at my heart. [*Opens his arms. She looks around at KEIFE.*]

Keife. I pop! [*Dives into valise.*]

Captain. My darling, my darling! I'll ask my father to come on to-morrow, and we'll turn the matter over to him.

Daisy. We haven't a day to lose.

Keife. [*Head in valise.*] If I'm not greatly mistaken, some one is coming out. I hear footsteps.

Daisy. From where? [*KEIFE points toward the parlor, c.*] The parlor? Mr. Stockslo's in there with papa figuring over my dowry.

Captain. The cold-blooded monster! [*Crosses, L.*] I'll step in here.

Daisy. No! Pa gave that room to auntie and cousin Oriana.

Captain. But I must hide somewhere. [*Goes, R.*]

Daisy. That's papa's room!

Keife. Get in the valise.

Captain. That's your diving-ground. I'd rather sit.
[*Takes the ulster off sofa, R., and covers himself.*] How's that?

Daisy. You'll suffocate!

Captain. No. I'm very warm and comfortable.

Keife. [C.] The steps come nearer.

Daisy. Blow out the light! [*Runs out, L. D. O'KEIFE blows out lamp—stage dark—moonlight from window, L.*]

Nancy. [*Enters, L. C.*] Pst! pst! are you there? [*Down R. C.*]

Keife. [*Staggered.*] What on earth brings you here?

Nancy. I had to come. I can't content myself. The girl here let me in without a word.

Keife. Sh! not so loud! [*Draws her down L.*]

Nancy. Aren't you alone?

Keife. Yes; but some one might overhear from the adjoining rooms.

Nancy. [*Following him, L.*] You will take me to the theatre, won't you? I can't ask my husband. He's a smouldering volcano.

Keife. Yes. He's a nice fellow! Just sent me a challenge. Expects to shoot me to-morrow.

Nancy. So soon! Can't you get him to postpone it?

Keife. Why should I? We drop the veil of mystery to-night.

Nancy. Yes, if the play makes a hit. If not—I dare not tell him.

Keife. Oh! now! come, I say! You distinctly agreed. Think of me! [*Crosses, L.*]

Nancy. How selfish you are! [*Seizes his hand.*] Listen to me! We're on the brink of failure.

Keife. Nonsense!

Nancy. I have just come from the theatre. I heard there that they may have to postpone the play. Their principal comedian has been suddenly seized with hoarseness.

Keife. Impossible! He rehearsed this morning.

Nancy. Can't you go and see him? Beg him to recover his voice just this once, to oblige a lady.

Keife. He shall play if he has to do it in pantomime. [*Going, L. C.*]

Nancy. [*Following him, stops.*] Some one's coming!

Keife. Go away, quickly!

Nancy. I can't; I must wait till you come back. My agitation and anxiety are too great.

Keife. If you're found here, there'll be no explaining.

Nancy. But I won't be found; I'll hide. [*Goes down L., and takes up lap-rug from chair.*] I'll sit here as quiet as a mouse. [*Sits and conceals herself.*]

Keife. [*Entreating.*] No—no—you must go away! I beg of you—oh, Lord—too late!

Griffing. [*Enters, R. C.*] Haven't you done packing yet?

Keife. [*Taking his hat from C.*] If I go—what will happen here? [*Looks from R. to chair, not heeding Griffing.*]

Griffing. Going out?

Keife. Heavens! What a night! [*Goes up.*] After me, the deluge! [*Rushes out, L. C., crushing his hat on his head.*]

Griffing. He's wandering! He's crazy! [*Looks around.*] I'll have his things packed and stored. What's all this trash? [*Bends over valise, C., and looks at scattered objects until his eye rests on NANCY'S feet, which are peeping out from the rug. He wipes his glasses and scrutinizes.*] A foot! A human foot! and, to judge by its dimensions, a lady's foot. [*Goes nearer, and aside.*] A very pretty foot! Covered by that hypocrite's rug. [*Comes, C.*] It's she! [*Rubs his hands gleefully.*] Aha, my dear Mr. O'Keife, we won't wait until to-morrow to clear you up! We'll do it to night—right away! I'll bring Oriana and show her that foot and its fair owner. [*Going, R. C.*] So that's why he was so confused. Oh! the double-dyed dynamiter! [*He steals off softly, R. C. When he's well off, the rug and cloak are pushed aside. NANCY and the CAPTAIN emerge and look after GRIFFING, then turn and face each other.*]

Nancy. Ha!

Captain. By Jove! [*They conceal themselves as before. After a moment they emerge again from the other side of the covering.*]

Nancy. Sir! [*Rising.*]

Captain. Captain Renseller! [*Rising.*] You remember, this afternoon?

Nancy. Oh! yes, yes! In ambush? [*Half laugh.*]

Captain. No, skirmishing! And you, Madame?

Nancy. On the retreat!

Captain. [*Offers his hand.*] Are we enemies?

Nancy. On the contrary, we must be allies.

Captain. Then we must cover our movements carefully, for the enemy is returning to the attack. Change places with me. [*He goes hurriedly to her seat, and she to his. Both cover themselves as Griffing enters, R. C., bringing in ORIANA.*]

Oriana. Uncle, what is the matter?

Griffing. [*On tip-toe.*] Sh! You're not to speak; only to look!

Oriana. [*Whispering.*] But tell me——

Griffing. Stand there! [*Places her down, c.*] and cast your eye this way. [*Points to, L., chair.*]

Oriana. What for?

Griffing. Behold! [*Suddenly throws off the rug and discovers CAPTAIN.*] The devil! [*Drops into chair L. of table.*]

Oriana. What's this?

Captain. Good evening!

Griffing. H—how did you get here?

Captain. [*As both rise.*] I heard your footsteps, and not being prepared to ask after your health again, I thought I'd try to pass unmolested.

Griffing. [*Gasping.*] What do you want?

Captain. [*Gets to c.*] To help my old friend O'Keife to pack. [*Kneels by valise.*]

Oriana. [*Crosses, L.*] For shame, uncle! You suspected Mr. O'Keife had somebody else behind this rug. I see it all. You needn't trouble yourself any further. I will wait until to-morrow. [*Going.*]

Griffing. [*Getting round table.*] Send Betsy in with a lamp! We want more light! [*ORIANA exits, L.*]

Captain. This constant excitement on your part must be very injurious.

Griffing. If I get a fit of apoplexy, it's on *your* conscience.

Betsy. [*Enters, L., with a lighted lamp.*] Good evening! [*Puts lamp on table and closes portières at window, L. CAPTAIN is kneeling at valise, back to audience.*]

Griffing. [*Looking at CAPTAIN'S feet.*] He hasn't a very big foot—and yet I can't make it out.

Betsy. [*Comes to GRIFFING, R. C., with a photograph.*] I found an old photograph of mine in my chest. It was taken a twelvemonth or so ago, but it looks first-rate. I wore my hair *à la* Langtry then. If you like it you can kape it. [*CAPTAIN laughs.*]

Griffing. [*Confused.*] Your picture! [*Crosses, c.*] What do I want with your picture? [*Takes an uneasy glance at CAPTAIN.*]

Betsy. Sure, you asked me for it.

Captain. [*Laughing.*] I see—Volume X. You are adding to your collection. I congratulate you!

Betsy. [*R.*] Me, sir? Why?

Griffing. [*Crosses, L.*] The Captain's fond of making very poor jokes. Turn that lamp up more, and then go. [*BETSY fixes lamp.*]

Captain. Everything's fish that comes to your net, eh?

Griffing. [*Seated, L. of table.*] I don't understand you.

Captain. Allow me to take this opportunity to propose for the hand of your daughter. [*Still kneeling.*]

Griffing. You select a fine moment.

Captain. I've just discovered that you possess a remarkably tender heart.

Griffing. Will you be quiet?

Betsy. [*Has fixed the lamp, and now lifts the corner of the cloak as if to fold it—discovers NANCY.*] Oh! [*She drops the corner.*]

Griffing. [*Crosses, R.*] What's that?

Betsy. I—I—hurted myself with a pin. [*Runs out, L. C.*]

Griffing. [*Speaking after her.*] I told you to go!

Captain. Now, sir, your answer!

Griffing. [*Looks at chair, R., and sees NANCY'S foot again.*] Aha!

Captain. What's the matter? Have you scratched yourself with the same pin?

Griffing. No, no; nothing! [*Aside.*] That foot! This time she shan't escape me. [*Rubs his hands gleefully.*] My dear Captain—I'm not in a frame of mind to answer you at present. So we'll make it another time.

Captain. I love Daisy! [*Rises.*] She loves me! Think of two weddings on the same day. O'Keife leading your niece to the altar—I leading Daisy. Two bridals—and only one breakfast. There's a chance for you to save money!

Griffing. [*Cunningly.*] Would you be satisfied to be married on the same day O'Keife marries my niece?

Captain. Do you consent?

Griffing. [*Turning half away.*] I consent.

Captain. [*Clasping his shoulder.*] My father!

Griffing. Not just yet! We don't know what may happen.

Captain. But I have your word!

Griffing. Oh, it's a bargain. When my niece marries that reprobate, you may have my daughter—not before. [*Turns his back to him.*]

Captain. [*Violently embracing his back.*] I'm wild with joy! [*Goes, C.*] Papa! [*Exits, L. C.*]

Griffing. I'll kill two fine birds with one stone. [*Looks at chair, R., as he goes, L.*] I'll summon my whole family to see the fun. [*Exits, L. D.*]

Naney. [*Pecps, and sees him off; then rises.*] How unfortunate! And nobody here to help me! [*BRASHER'S voice heard outside. She starts.*] Heavens! Tippy back here again! Where can I go? [*Looks toward the window, L.*]

Ah, the window! [*Hides behind the curtains as BRASHER enters, c. L., in disorder.*]

Brasher. I've been walking the streets for three hours, and everything swims before me. I've been fished out from under yellow cabs at every crossing. This is where that wretch is stopping. How hot! I'm suffocating! I must open that window. [*Makes a few steps toward it; the curtains are seen to move very violently.*] Ah! the curtains are blowing—the window must be open. The heat's in here. [*Taps his head.*] What do I want here, anyway? [*Sits.*] I remember! I went back to the hotel. She had gone out. The hall-porter asked me if I was Mr. O'Keife. [*Laughs hysterically.*] I, Mr. O'Keife! Then he asked me if I were a friend of his. I—I—his friend? [*Sardonic laugh.*] And I answered yes. Then he told me the lady in No. 117 had left, and she had gone to call on him. The lady in No. 117! That's my wife! Yes, yes, now I remember! That's what brought me here. I want to surprise them—to confront them—convict them—then! [*Controls himself.*] But she hasn't got here yet! Nor he! I'll wait!

Griffing. [*Outside.*] Come in, all of you!

Mrs. Dangery. [*Outside.*] What's your hurry? Give a body a moment!

Brasher. They're coming! I'll observe. [*Covers himself with the cloak on sofa, R.*]

Griffing. [*Outside.*] Come in, all of you, and convince yourselves!

Mrs. Dangery. [*Enters, L. D., with GRIFFING, followed by ORIANA and DAISY; in a whisper to him.*] What is it anyway?

Griffing. We're going to bag a poet.

Mrs. Dangery. Brother, you are all the time seeing ghosts.

Griffing. Not exactly a ghost this time, Huldah—a fairy! Or, to be more exact, Mr. O'Keife's fairy.

Mrs. Dangery. Girls, he's got 'em! The spirits are appearing to him.

Griffing. Huldah, remove the cloak from that sofa. [*Mrs. DANGERY goes over to R.*] The feet are still there, but they seem to have grown a second time.

Mrs. Dangery. [*Removes cloak and discovers BRASHER.*] What's this? [*The two girls laugh at L.*]

Griffing. Tippy Brasher!

Brasher. [*Rising, gruffly.*] Good evening!

Mrs. Dangery. Mr. Brasher!

Oriana. Is that all for to-night? [*Crosses past DAISY.*] Uncle, I am really becoming very tired.

Griffing. [*To BRASHER, furious.*] What brings you here?

Brasher. [*Rising.*] If you take that tone, I can go.

Griffing. [*Crosses to him soothingly.*] No, no; I didn't mean it.

Brasher. [*Gloomily.*] I'm after *her* and *him*!

Griffing. [*To ORIANA, triumphantly, crossing from one to another.*] You hear, you hear! he's after them both! [*To BRASHER.*] She refuses to believe one word against them.

Brasher. [*Crosses to ORIANA.*] Shake hands with me, miss! I wish I could say the same—but I found them together, found her registered in his name, found his writing in her papers; and yet, when she says to me, "Tip, you're a fool. It's all right!" I'd give my life to say, "Nancy, I know I'm an ass!" [*Crosses, R.*]

Griffing. Soft ninny! [*Gets, L.*]

Oriana. Do as I do! Be patient, and wait till to-morrow! [*O'KEIFE appears, L. C.*]

Daisy. Here he is!

Keife. [*Half aside.*] The whole gang! [*In dismay.*]

Brasher. Sir, where's my wife?

Keife. You're going to shoot me to-morrow, so you've no right to question.

Brasher. Will you or will you not——

Keife. Excuse me! I shall be at everybody's service after twelve o'clock to-night.

Mrs. Dangery. [*As the clock commences to strike.*] Well, that's only four hours off. [*Trying to pacify BRASHER.*] We can wait four hours.

O'Keife. Eight o'clock! I must go to the theatre.

Oriana and Daisy. Take us! Take us!

Griffing. We'll all go!

Nancy. [*Steps from behind the curtain.*] No! you must take me!

All. Nancy!

Nancy. [*Passing in front and up.*] To the play, come! [*Drags O'KEIFE off, C. ORIANA shrieks; DAISY tries to quiet her. BRASHER gasps; GRIFFING tries to quiet him. MRS. DANGERY busies herself running from one group to the other.*]

BUSY TABLEAU AS CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*Same as last. Midnight. Just as the curtain is about to rise, the music becomes a tremolo, and a clock distinctly strikes the hour of twelve. Lighted lamp discovered on centre table.*

After this, BETSY enters, L. C., followed by CAPTAIN RENSELLER, who deposits his hat and coat on a chair.

Captain. Turn the lamp up ! Let us have more light !

Betsy. The lady seems to be very hysterical.

Captain. I hope it will soon pass over. Is that ice-water ?

[*Examines carafe on c. table.*]

Betsy. Yis, sor. I brought it up a few minutes ago.

Captain. I suppose there's a doctor in the neighborhood, in case of need ?

Betsy. Yis, sor ; there is one forninst the corner. Shall I run and ring him up ?

Captain. No. Wait and see. [*Hurries to door, c.*] Here they come ! [*NANCY hurries past him all excitement and hysterical. O'KEIFE follows, and he and the CAPTAIN come down. She clasps her hands to her face, quite hysterically, and remains motionless.*]

Captain. [*To KEIFE.*] Well ?

Keife. [*Finger to lips.*] Hush ! [*NANCY shows by her trembling that she is sobbing violently.*]

Captain. She is weeping !

Keife. Thank goodness ! She'll get over it now. The strain has been fearful. [*Gets, R. To NANCY.*] Will you drink some water ?

Nancy. No.

Keife. Shall we send for a doctor ? [*BETSY exits.*]

Nancy. [*Taking her hands from her eyes, showing traces of weeping.*] What for ? I am not ill.

Keife. Then why these tears ?

Nancy. [*As if to herself.*] I had to weep. Now I feel relieved. What a night ! I sat in my box and dared not look around. My husband was at the other side of the theatre with his eyes riveted on me. The performance commenced.

I felt as if I were going to die. People came in late, and nobody seemed to pay any attention to the stage. At last everything grew quiet, and the play began, as I thought, to make an impression. But the curtain fell on the first act amidst a dead silence. The air felt awfully close. It seemed to me as if the whole audience had but one pair of eyes—the eyes of my husband—and they never diverted their gaze from me during the whole wait between the acts. Then the curtain rose for the second time. People commenced to grow warmer. There was a little applause. Only my Tip sat immovable, and looked at me instead of the stage. The interest rose from scene to scene. My heart first grew quick, then excited, and finally it throbbed as though it would break through my side. The applause rose to enthusiasm. The enthusiasm kept on increasing, and yet I kept on asking myself—“Is it a success? Is it?” Once I almost cried aloud—for I looked at Tip. He had forgotten me, and his jealousy and his fancied misery—and had eyes only for the stage. They called for the author. They shouted and screamed. You appeared; you said: “I can accept only a small portion of this honor, for I had a helper—a lady whose name, if she permits, I shall announce in tomorrow’s papers.” You looked involuntarily toward my box, and everybody looked up, too. I fled to the back of the box. They couldn’t see me, but they applauded, and you applauded. But I sat there and couldn’t stir. I felt a silence like death within me. The goal of my girlish ambition was reached—and suddenly I felt a dart through my heart. Everything I had done to gain this triumph appeared before me! I felt the wrong I had done my husband; the torments of doubt to which I had consigned him for a whim—a caprice. [*Walks up and down.*] And I could have wept in remorse, but I had not a tear in my eyes; and then I looked out again, but the house was empty; Tip was gone! Oh, Tip! good, sensible, loving Tip! [*To KEIFE.*] Where is he? Go find him! Bring him to me! Oh, Tip! Tip! Where are you?

Keife. [*Gently.*] We will both look for him. Dispose of us as you please. [*The CAPTAIN gets his hat and coat.*]

Nancy. [*Rising and giving KEIFE her hand.*] Brave, noble partner! Good, generous heart! I’ve used you shamefully, and yet you are ready to help me—the cause of all your troubles. I’m a horrid, selfish creature! But I can mend everything. I need only speak a word to the dear girl in there [*pointing and crossing, L.*], and you’ll be happy. I’ll say that word to her at once. [*Goes to L. door and knocks.*] Oriana! No answer, but I hear footsteps. Some one is in

there. [*Knocks again.*] Oriana! Open! It is I! You needn't wait till to-morrow for the truth. It's all out, *now!* [*Stamps her foot angrily.*] Open, I say! Do you want to be miserable all night, when you can be happy at once? [*The bolt is drawn.*] She's there! You wait! You shall be happy, too! both of you! [*Exits, c. l.*]

Captain. [*To O'KEIFE.*] Accept my congratulations, my dear fellow, both as author and bridegroom. [*KEIFE stands near door, listening and not heeding CAPTAIN.*] Your play is charming! I shouted myself hoarse, too. I never saw an audience so warm. It's good for the balance of the season. You'll be as rich as you are famous, too!

Keife. [*Not heeding.*] Strange I don't hear her voice. And now her footsteps are silent, too.

Captain. [*With a shrug.*] He doesn't hear a word I say. [*Goes up stage and throws himself in chair.*]

Keife. I hear faint breathing at the other side. She's listening! Perhaps she wants me to call her. Oriana! my darling! It's I! [*The door opens suddenly and almost strikes him on the nose. He puts his hand to his face, as GRIFFING enters, l. d.*]

Griffing. [*Very gruffly.*] Did it hit you?

Keife. I should say so.

Griffing. You're wanted in there.

Keife. I fly! [*Exits, l. d.*]

Griffing. [*Ill-humoredly.*] It seems I've made a confounded fool of myself. I'm completely humbugged, and can't blame anyone. That's where it cuts. This infernal hypocrite has turned out to be the soul of honor—just to aggravate me. Now for reconciliation—ecstasies—embraces—and kisses—Pah!

Keife. [*Inside.*] Oriana! My own! my own!

Griffing. He's got her! As soon as they collect their senses, they'll turn on me. Of course, I'm an old bear; and, worse than that, I suppose they'll begin to talk over the photographs. O! they won't spare me. They're all relatives. I expect no mercy. [*Turns and confronts CAPTAIN, who laughs at him.*] That settles it! It only needed you to make the thing complete.

Captain. Good evening, papa!

Griffing. What the— [*Remembers.*] The man's right! He's got to have Daisy, as long as her cousin marries the other chap. I'm caught in my own trap.

Captain. I hope I may now inquire after the state of your health? [*Sits, r. c.*]

Griffing. [*Sits, l. c.*] Thank you! I'm pretty miserable.

Are you aware that I have to explain this little arrangement to young Sikes Stockslow?

Captain. Don't give yourself the slightest concern about that. What am I here for? I'll take that on myself.

Griffing. Will you? [*Takes both his hands.*]

Captain. Certainly. Siksey and I have another little arrangement which meets this very emergency. We'll settle it on the spot. He came from the play with us, and is waiting down-stairs. Permit me to send for him. Or perhaps I'd better find him before he sees you and make the announcement. [*Exits, c. L.*]

Griffing. There's no denying—he's a dashing fellow! Bold—quick—and full of expedients. But he'll turn any house he lives in upside down. Much as I love my daughter, I think young married people ought to begin house-keeping apart from their parents—as far apart as possible—and as soon as possible.

Stockslow. [*Outside.*] Oh! but I say——

Captain. [*Outside.*] But, old chap——

Griffing. [*Listening.*] Now they're at it!

Stockslow. [*Outside.*] It's an outrage!

Griffing. I'm going to catch it! [*STOCKSLOW enters, followed by CAPTAIN.*]

Stockslow. [*To GRIFFING.*] Why, it was only this evening you and I settled the little preliminaries.

Griffing. Hem! Well, you see—my dear friend; in a moment of over-confidence, I staked your happiness, my own wishes, and my daughter's prospects, upon a single contingency. The contingency has eventuated, and we have lost.

Stockslow. And you've lost the best little son-in-law you ever saw, if I do say it. [*Crosses, R.*]

Griffing. Well, if you come to that, you've lost the best little father-in-law that was ever given to a conceited little monkey, if I do say it.

Captain. [*Crosses, c.*] Don't quarrel, gentlemen. May I ask where Miss Daisy is?

Stockslow. She's down-stairs with her aunt—complaining of fatigue. I was just going to say good-night and leave, when you came for me.

Captain. [*To GRIFFING.*] Would you have the goodness to call her?

Griffing. [*In a temper.*] Well, I——

Captain. Thanks, I thought you would. [*Taps bell on table, BETSY enters, c.*] Will you kindly tell Miss Griffing that her papa wants her?

Griffing. [*Furious.*] You young—will you——

Betsy. [*Giving GRIFFING a photograph.*] Here's a better one. [*GRIFFING snatches the picture from her and tears it.* *Exit BETSY, L. C.*]

Captain. [*Takes him by both hands.*] You shall behold our young friend from Wall Street resign her to me with the best grace in the world.

Griffing. What?

Captain. He's going to be my best man.

Griffing. [*Crosses to STOCKSLOW.*] You'll be his best man?

Stockslow. Well, you see, in a moment of over-confidence, I made a little bet with him on a certain contingency, and as the emergency has transpired, I have got to assist in my own defeat. [*Titters.*]

Griffing. Don't say another word. We've both been too rash.

Daisy. [*Entering, L. C.*] What is it, papa? [*Mrs. DANGERY follows.*]

Captain. Daisy, will you give Mr. Stockslow your hand? [*STOCKSLOW crosses to her, holds his hand out.*]

Daisy. Never!

Stockslow. [*To CAPTAIN.*] She don't catch!

Captain. It's for our happiness.

Daisy. I won't! I can't bear him—and he knows it.

Stockslow. But I'm to be the little best man.

Daisy. Oh! that's it!

Captain. Yes, that's it!

Mrs. Dangery. [*Crosses to R. C.*] Do you consent at last?

Griffing. Oh, yes; and little Siksey will lead her to her fate.

Daisy. Well, I won't be led. [*All in dismay.*]

Mrs. Dangery, Captain, and Griffing. [*Together.*] What? [*GRIFFING crosses, C.*]

Daisy. I'll come alone! [*Goes to CAPTAIN.*]

Captain. My own sweet bride! [*Embraces her.* *STOCKSLOW embraces GRIFFING, who throws him off.*]

Griffing. Don't bother me! [*TIP BRASHER appears at C., and looks on.*] Here comes the biggest fool of the lot—not counting myself.

Brasher. Hist! [*Beckons GRIFFING, who goes to him.* *TIP whispers to him; then they both shake hands.*]

Griffing. There's a pair of us.

Brasher. That's all right! [*Whispers again to GRIFFING; he nods approval, and beckons to Mrs. DANGERY and whispers to her.* *Mrs. DANGERY returns and whispers to DAISY,*

who in her turn whispers to CAPTAIN, who whispers to STOCKSLOW. TIP then beckons off stage, and BETSY brings on an immense floral ornament; other servants appear laden with every conceivable shape of floral ornament: baskets, ships, harps, wreaths, which they place about the stage as MRS. DANGERY directs. CAPTAIN lights the chandelier. All this done very quickly and with animation. CAPTAIN and DAISY and MRS. DANGERY assist. STOCKSLOW constantly getting in the way, and is pushed from side to side. The stage finally presents a floral and festive scene.]

Griffing. She'll be knocked over completely.

Brasher. She's coming! Hide me! [MRS. DANGERY, DAISY, STOCKSLOW, and CAPTAIN form a barricade, &c., and he conceals himself behind them, as ORIANA appears leading NANCY and followed by O'KEIFE. All on the stage clap their hands.]

Betsy. [Applauds vigorously.] Hi, Hi, Hi! [GRIFFING takes her by the nape of neck and runs her off, L. C.]

Nancy. What's all this? Who's this for?

Griffing. For you—for your triumph.

Nancy. You did it? [GRIFFING shakes his head. She turns to O'KEIFE.] Then you did? [He shakes his head.] No? then you? [To CAPTAIN.]

Captain and Daisy. Guess!

Mrs. Dangery. Who would run out of the theatre when the curtain fell and send messengers to ring up every florist far and near, and plunder every hot-house for you?

Nancy. It was Tip! My own old big-hearted, clever Tip. [Calls.] Tip! Where are you?

Brasher. [Showing his head.] Here!

Nancy. Come to me this instant!

Brasher. I'm afraid!

Nancy. Tip! Dear old Tip! [He emerges, pushed forward by the others. She clasps him in her arms and turns him round.] Oh! you dear, big goosey! You trust me now, don't you?

Griffing. I would like to have her photograph just so.

Brasher. [L. of NANCY.] I was bound you should have more flowers than anybody on the stage ever got. I guess I've done it. Let 'em match this. [Sees O'KEIFE, and advances to him.] Sir! [NANCY urges him on by pulling his elbow.]

Keife. I suppose now that you're forgiven—I'm forgiven. [Crosses to BRASHER.]

Brasher. Lord, yes! [Reflectively.] So you write plays, too?

Keife. A little.

Brasher. But you never made such a hit as you and she did to-night. [*NANCY tries to restrain him.*]

Keife. Never!

Brasher. You authors must be glad to get a smart person to help you now and then. [*NANCY pulls him round and expostulates with him.*]

Keife. He's right! [*Crosses to NANCY, takes her hand.*] Ladies and gentlemen, let me present the member of the firm who's entitled to all of the credit. [*All clap their hands.*]

Griffing. Speech! Speech! [*MRS. DANGERY remonstrates with him.*]

All. Yes! Yes! Speech! [*NANCY looks at O'KEIFE and BRASHER apprehensively.*]

Brasher. Oh! you must! [*He leads her to the footlights.* The rest group for final tableaux. GRIFFING and MRS. DANGERY, L. ORIANA and O'KEIFE, L. C. CAPTAIN, DAISY, and STOCKSLOW, R. BRASHER, R. C.]

Nancy.

Accustomed though I am to public speaking,
This friendly demonstration sets me quaking.
I know your plaudits for the authors are—
But don't forget the busy actors' share—
So, if our little play has seized your fancy,
The credit's to the Company——

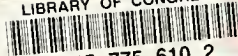
Keife. And Nancy!

CURTAIN.





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